

Halesowen

CHRONICLE



Thursday, July 5, 2018

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Football is coming home to the Grove, says president

YELTZ BACK IN HANDS OF FANS

Report by Matt Maher

HALESOWEN Town Football Club has been bought by its president.

Colin Brookes says the club has been brought 'back to the fans' after completing his takeover of the Yeltz, the club he has been involved with for a quarter of a century.

The 76-year-old was on Tuesday confirmed as the new man in charge at the Grove, after agreeing a deal with former owners the Lynch family thought to be worth around £50,000.

Club president Mr Brookes has purchased the club from Tammy Lynch, wife of former owner Steve Lynch. It was announced in February that Mrs Lynch had agreed a deal but negotiations have taken much longer than expected.

It brings to an end months of uncertainty surrounding the 145-year-old club, which was brought to the brink after Mr Lynch was hit with a two-year football ban by the Football Association.

Mr Brookes said: "The main emotion is relief, just pure relief. The past few months have been the most stressful in my 25 years at the club. I've never known anything like it. I'm 76 years old but for the past few weeks I've felt 96. Now I feel 21 again!"

Care

"I'm so pleased we have been able to get things over the line. The club is back in the hands of people who care about it. Halesowen Town has come home, it is back with the fans. We all know the hard work starts now."

Brookes, who has held a variety of roles at the Yeltz since 1993, is the figurehead for the takeover but day-to-day running is being taken on by his daughter, the current Yeltz chairman Karen Brookes, with investor Keith McKenna.

Management duo John Hill and Matt Clarke have been promised an increased budget for the Southern League Premier Central campaign.

The new owners have scheduled a fans' forum for 12.30pm on Sunday at the Grove, where they will further explain their plans.



Colin Brookes

DANCERS CRUISE TO SUCCESS IN CARIBBEAN



Members of Cradley Heath's Debonair Dance Academy will be entertaining cruise ship passengers in the Caribbean

A TROUPE of 24 dancers, aged from four to 26, will be entertaining passengers on a Caribbean cruise ship.

Members of the Debonair Dance Academy will be performing four times in the 934-seat Metropolitan Theatre on the cruise liner, MSC Seaside, one of the world's largest cruise ships.

In recent years members of the Cradley Heath-based dance group have performed in London's West End, at the O2 Arena, the

Royal Albert Hall, Disneyland Paris and various local theatres including the Birmingham New Alexandra and Wolverhampton Grand.

The dancers are flying out to Miami as part of a 90-strong group including friends and family for a week-long cruise visiting Jamaica, Mexico, The Bahamas and the Cayman Islands.

The dancers will be performing when the ship is sailing between destinations.

Principal Debbie Baggott said: "I'm de-

lighted to have gained this opportunity for the school. We will be flying the flag high, representing all Debonair students on board this amazing Caribbean cruise.

"I'm extremely proud of the group who have rehearsed their routines to perfection and I am so excited because it will create memories to treasure for a lifetime."

Meanwhile, the academy is planning to send a group of dancers to New York to perform at a theatre on Broadway next year.

EVENTS

Towns get into the carnival spirit

TWO of Dudley borough's biggest carnivals are held this weekend.

Halesowen Carnival, music festival and food and drink festival is held in Highfield Park on Saturday from noon. The carnival is now in its fourth year and 2017's event attracted around 7,000 visitors. Stourbridge Carnival, in its 31st year, takes over the High Street on Sunday with lots of live entertainment and big crowds anticipated.

PROTESTS

400 police officers sent for Trump visit

WEST Midlands Police will send hundreds of officers to London because of mass protests anticipated during Donald Trump's visit next week.

The cash-strapped force is expected to dispatch 400 officers to the nation's capital for the US President's trip to the UK, which is expected to last three days starting on July 12.

INSIDE

BOSTIN' START FOR FESTIVAL



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Runners filled the street for the Black Country Road Run at Halesowen



Kerry Pike from Birmingham in a 1953 Bentley at the classic car show

Black Country Festival off to a sizzling start

THE Black Country Festival got off to a bostin' start at the weekend.

Thousands flocked to events, from road runs to classic car shows and fun days, as the month-long celebrations got under way.

On Saturday around 1,000 people attended the Gornal Fun Day. Basking in the sunshine, families enjoyed face painting, fair rides, stalls, a birds of prey display and a battle reenactment group. Joao Porter, one of the organisers, said: "The whole event went really well and the weather was brilliant."

The same day crowds lined the streets to see a cavalcade of classic cars parade along the High Street in Dudley as part in the second Dudley Classic Car Show, with a display of 29 vehicles. The magnificent motors included a Rolls Royce, an Aston Martin and two E-type Jaguars. Organiser John Emms said: "Lots said they were really pleased they had come as they said they hadn't visited Dudley for years.

Mayor

On Sunday runners braved sweltering conditions to take on the Black Country Road Run – including West Midlands mayor Andy Street, blind fundraising legend Dave Heeley and Halesowen & Rowley Regis MP James Morris – which took place around Halesowen and was organised by Halesowen and Rowley Regis Rotary Club.

Alan Bowler, one of the organisers, said: "There might have been a few people who were put off by the desperately hot weather but we probably had about 1,000 people come along. The feedback has been really positive."

The Black Country Festival, now in its fifth year, runs until July 29, with Black Country Day on July 14. A street food festival is at Stourbridge's Bonded Warehouse on Friday and Halesowen Carnival at Highfield Park on Saturday, the same day as the Chain Makers Festival in Cradley Heath, Tividale Park and Netherton Park fun days. Stourbridge Carnival is on Sunday.



Mayor Andy Street, Blind Dave Heeley and MP James Morris took part in the Black Country Road Run



Owl man Karl Perry brought Boo to Gornal Fun Day



Made up – Maddison Sharp, six, enjoyed Gornal Fun Day



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A SCULPTURE to honour people who fought to preserve Haden Hill House and Haden Old Hall in Cradley Heath will be officially unveiled on Sunday.

The Friends of Haden Hill Estate commissioned Black Country sculptor Luke Perry to create a wedding bower. The Deputy Mayor of Sandwell Councillor Carol Goult will join the Friends and councillors to unveil the sculpture outside Haden Hill House at 2pm.

BUGS Ukulele Strummers will be performing immediately after the unveiling ceremony and again at 3.15pm and everyone is welcome to attend.

Ken Smith, chair of the Friends group, said: "We wanted to do something to commemorate what was done by the late Meryl Cockin, The Preservation Society, The Protection Society and others in the 1970s to save these two wonderful buildings.

"We wanted to create a focal point, which can also be used for wedding photography."

Luke Perry has designed the bower using influences from the park, including the dragons on the cast iron park benches installed in the 1930s.

The houses were derelict and faced a real risk of being demolished in the early 1970s. However, following a campaign, the houses were saved.

Haden Hill House was extensively restored in the 1980s, by this time under Sandwell Council's ownership, and it opened as a museum open to the public. It is also now licensed for wedding ceremonies.

Man dies in fall from factory roof

A MAN has died after falling from the roof of an industrial unit in Dudley.

The 43-year-old man was found in cardiac arrest after falling in Lower Gornal on Friday morning.

Ambulance crews and police were called to the scene off Deepdale Lane at 11.40am, where tape cordoned off an area outside a building operated by Surface Technik Ltd.

A helicopter was also seen landing at nearby playing fields next to Roberts Primary School.

A West Midlands Police spokesman said: "Police can confirm that the man who fell from a roof at an industrial unit in Deepdale Lane, Lower Gornal before midday died at the scene.

The 43-year-old man lived in Walsall and investigations continue."

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) spokesman added: "HSE is aware of this incident and has supported the police who have primacy over the investigation."

More than 300 fined in spy car campaign

MORE than 330 motorists on the school run have been slapped with fines after being caught by a spy car introduced as part of a crackdown on dangerous parking outside schools.

The Dudley Council camera vehicle has been out on the streets looking for evidence of parking outside schools with drivers facing fines of up to £70. Since the vehicle was introduced nine months ago in Dudley borough, parents have paid more than £11,500 in fines. The vehicle was introduced to improve children's safety and followed complaints about problem parking.

A total of 336 penalty notices were dished out between September 1 and June 22 and the council has so far collected £11,557 in fines.

Councillor Karen Shakespeare said the safety of children is 'the highest priority'. The camera captures those motorists who do not observe the yellow zig-zag lines.

Councillor Shakespeare said: "Although a majority of motorists park responsibly, there are some that continue to park illegally and put the lives of our children at risk."

She added: "The zig-zag lines are there for a reason and we will continue to use the CCTV vehicle on the streets around our schools."

Most fines relate to bad parking outside Christ Church Primary School, Cosley, near to St Joseph's Primary at Kates Hill.

Funding offer to adapt properties

PEOPLE with mobility issues and other difficulties in the home can benefit from the Dudley Home Improvement Service.

The Dudley Council-run service oversees property adaptations for people of all ages who live in their own home or rent privately, with grants for works along with advice and practical support. People who are struggling with bathing, accessing the property or moving around within the home can apply. Typical adaptations include handrails, ramps, level access showers, lifts, even home extensions.

Councillor Laura Taylor, cabinet member for housing, said: "We want to help people stay safe and independent in their own homes."

Call 0300 555 0055.

Shop plan for site

A CONVENIENCE store could be built on the site of a former petrol station in Kingswinford. Plans have been submitted to Dudley Council for the site in Stream Road.

First look at museum's 1940s-60s town



An artist's impression of 40s-60s town

THIS exclusive image shows the 1940s-60s town that will be built at the Black Country Living Museum which has also revealed record profit and visitor numbers.

Based on two roads, Market Place and Pinfold Lane, next to the Dudley attraction's fairground, it will tell the area's story up to the closure of the Baggeridge Coal Mine in 1968.

It comes as the museum records its highest profit and visitor numbers. Almost 333,000 people went through the doors of the open-air attraction last year, contributing to a record

£7.3 million takings. The income provides a boost to the museum's £23m project for a 1940s and 60s town and a new visitor centre capable of taking in 5,000 people a day.

Chief executive Andrew Lovett said: "Our appeal and performance further strengthens the museum's financial position as we head into a phase of major development."

"Now we have the opportunity to develop the open-air attraction further. We have attractions based up to the 1930s, but we want to be able to extend our stage, taking it forward

to the 40s, 50s and 60s. We want to be able to accommodate more people, give them more to see and get them to stay here longer."

A total 332,778 people went through the doors of the museum on Tipton Road in 2017, up more than a third from 2013. The museum's commercial income resulted in a profit of £694,607, compared to £567,029 in 2016.

The trust spent £1.7m on retail, £3.6m on operating the museum and around £600,000 was spent on developing the site.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Family tribute to rider in fatal crash

THE family of an Oldbury motorcyclist, who was killed in a crash near Stourbridge, have paid tribute to the 'wonderful, funny man'.

Patrick Hendy died when his Triumph motorcycle was involved in a crash with a Mercedes C180 on the A458 Bridgnorth Road, near Stourton, at around 1pm on June 23.

The 48-year-old suffered serious injuries and died at the scene.

His family in a statement, they said: "We are utterly devastated by our loss of such a wonderful, funny man."

Staffordshire Police's Collision Investigation Unit has launched an investigation into the crash.

Roadworks scheme is nearly finished

AN end is in site for a multi-million pound road improvement scheme.

Council chiefs have confirmed that the £6.3 million modernisation programme taking place on Pensnett High Street, Dudley, has reached its final stages and will be fully complete by the end of July.

The scheme has included widening the road, installing new traffic signals to improve traffic flow and pedestrian safety in the area.

The final stages will see the further installation of traffic signals, road resurfacing and pavement repairs.

Howzat for charity fundraiser match?

CHARITIES will be in a spin when council officers and councillors go head-to-head in an annual cricket match.

The two teams from Dudley Council will be playing to raise funds for the Mayor of Dudley's chosen charities.

The annual clash, which is open to the public, will see councillors fielding a side to take on council officers at Stourbridge War Memorial Ground on July 13. All money raised will go to Headway Black Country, Hope Centre in Halesowen and the Whitehouse Cancer Support in Dudley.

Coffee morning to help Romanian orphans

A COFFEE morning will help to raise funds for a Romanian children's charity.

The event will take place on Saturday at the Hurst Green Methodist Church, in Narrow Lane, Halesowen, in aid of Caminul Feliz village.

The centre provides care for 250 orphaned and abandoned children. The children craft items that will be on sale at the coffee morning, between 10.30am and noon.



Local veterans Brian Lee, William Woodall and Ron Webb with members of the Marching Band of St Gregory's



Richard Cartwright, left, and Bob Coates in uniform



RAF Cadets on parade during Armed Forces Day

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Speeding driver is jailed after police find cocaine

A DRUG dealer who drove into trouble when spotted speeding by a police patrol in the early hours has been locked up for three years and three months.

The officers thought the motorist might be high on either drugs or drink and gave chase, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard. But when father-of-five Aaron Botfield came to a standstill in Thorne Road, Rowley Regis, it was discovered he was a cocaine dealer.

More cash machines disappear

MORE than five free-to-use cash machines are lost in the Black Country every month, it has emerged.

Experts are now warning that rural villagers may soon face difficulties obtaining money.

The figures come as part of the study into the impact of bank branches closures.

In November there were 1,440 cash dispensers in the Black Country, but now there are 1,408, according to consumer group Which?

Walsall saw the biggest rate drop, down from 333 to 318, followed by Dudley, 369 to 356 and Sandwell, 387 to 381. Wolverhampton saw a small increase, from 351 to 353.

In South Staffordshire the number dropped from 63 to 59, in Stafford from 123 to 116 while Cannock was up one from 104 to 105.

Mr Howard Seale prosecuting, said nine wraps of the drug – worth £180 on the street – were found in his car along with £598 cash and two mobile phones. One of these had 596 text messages linked to drug deals in the five months up to the night he was stopped in November 2017. There was also information indicating 550 deals had been organised in a single month.

The messages made it clear that the defendant – who had spent £120 on mobile phone top-ups during the proceeding week – was selling the cocaine for somebody else.

Banned

Botfield, of Regis Road, Rowley Regis, had also spent £3,300 in five months hiring different cars in a bid to evade police attention.

The 25-year-old was also driving whilst banned. He had 19 previous convictions involving 36 offences which including crimes of assault and possession of an offensive weapon.

Mr William Dudley, defending, said Botfield initially became involved with his drug dealer to service his own supply of cocaine.

Botfield admitted possession of cocaine with intent to supply and driving while disqualified. He was jailed and will be banned from driving for three years on release.

Walkers face heat to make dreams come true



Promise Dreams trustee Suresh Bawa, DJ Dicky Dodd and patron Steve Bull at Himley Cricket Club

IN an effort to make dreams come true for ill children, hundreds of people walked a gruelling nine miles in the intense heat from Himley Cricket Club to Wolverhampton Racecourse.

Promise Dreams' annual fundraiser walk took place on Sunday with participants aiming to raise money for the Wolverhampton-based charity that aims to make dreams become a reality for children with serious or terminal illnesses.

More than 500 people walked the course via Wombourne and the Penn Road in extreme conditions in the hope that they can improve on the impressive £30,000 haul from last year's walk.

Corporate partnership manager at Promise Dreams, Dan Smith, said: "It was brilliant, considering the weather. We normally wish for good weather but it was a tad too hot and it wound down earlier than expected after the

walk, but we're really chuffed with how it all went. It was absolutely brilliant."

"I want to thank our volunteer marshals who took their time to help out and stand in that heat, they were brilliant as always."

The national charity based at Stafford Road in Wolverhampton, is supported by Wolves legend Steve Bull, who is a patron and was at Saturday's event.

New chain seize pizza the action

A NEW pizza restaurant is set to open the first of a new chain at Merry Hill as part of a £100 million leisure investment at the shopping centre.

The PIZZASQR concept will open later this summer as owner Intu prepares to invest to replicate the successful leisure offer of its other popular locations around the UK.

PIZZASQR will sell artisanal square pizza slices and is on its way to becoming one of the biggest pizza chains in the country – with plans to open 100 stores in the next five years.

Davide Cason, operations manager at PIZZASQR, said: "Pizza doesn't need to be complicated. I am excited to introduce PIZZASQR – simple and delicious pizza as square slices."

"Our menu will combine the freshest ingredients, seasonal toppings and expert craftsmanship to create, based on authentic recipes from Rome, pizza everyone is going to love. But, pizza is only just a slice of it. Through the week, we will also serve freshly made sandwiches, soups, pastries and of course, authentic Italian coffee."

Intu Merry Hill is a fantastic destination with enormous potential as a key dining location."

Centre bosses into plan to build a 180,000 square foot leisure extension at Merry Hill that will introduce more restaurants.

Helping Hands is opening in town

A NATIONAL care home provider has opened a new branch in Stourbridge. The new Helping Hands branch will officially open in High Street on Monday. The official opening will be by Councillor Nicolas Barlow, Dudley Council's cabinet member for adult social care, with Helping Hands chief executive Tim Lee.

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Patients facing hospital delays but the situation is improving

NEARLY 250 emergency patients arriving in ambulances at Russells Hall Hospital were left waiting more than half an hour to be seen.

Figures reveal that a total of 240 patients were left waiting at the Dudley hospital for more than 30 minutes in April – with nine waiting for over an hour.

Despite still not hitting targets, the trust has made an improvement since the figures for March, when 288 people were waiting more than 30 minutes. Then 35 people were forced to wait for more than an hour.

Carillion job losses now reach 2,400

THE number of workers losing their jobs following the collapse of Wolverhampton-based construction giant Carillion has topped 2,400.

The Official Receiver reported that a further 14 employees have transferred to new suppliers over the past week, taking the total of those finding other work to 12,338 – 68 per cent of the workforce working for the engineering and services group when it went into compulsory liquidation in January.

A further 28 staff will be leaving the business this week, taking the number of redundancies to 2,403. Almost 1,250 employees have left during the liquidation through finding new jobs, retirement or other reasons. The update said 2,100 employees are currently retained to enable Carillion to deliver its remaining services.

The Government sets a 15 minute target for patient handovers.

The improvement, with 48 fewer breaches, has been hailed as encouraging.

Dudley councillor Rachel Harris said: "It is heartening to see a step in the right direction. Clearly there is more work and support that the trust needs to continue on this journey of improving handover times."

Trust bosses vowed to continue to work on improving their performance.

Karen Kelly, chief operating officer at Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, said: "We do not leave any patient waiting inside an ambulance. Our teams at the Dudley Group are working very hard to ensure patients who arrive by ambulance are seen and assessed then handed over as quickly and efficiently as possible.

"We have relocated our ambulance triage area so that we have the flexibility to increase the number of cubicles, as required. At times, this flexibility due to staffing proves extremely challenging. However, we will continue to work with our staff and West Midlands Ambulance Service to improve this performance further."

Countryside fire warning after Kinver blaze



Firefighters used hoses and beaters to tackle a fire on Kinver Edge. Picture: Staffordshire Fire Service

A LARGE grass fire was sparked at beauty spot Kinver Edge last week as the continuing summer heatwave causes more concern over fires.

The National Trust site near Stourbridge has warned visitors against barbecues, campfires and discarding cigarettes.

Alerts have been issued across the country due to the hot and dry conditions.

Firefighters from the West Midlands

have already been called in to help colleagues in the north tackle major moor fires in Lancashire and Greater Manchester.

Crews tackled the Kinver fire over an area measuring 320ft by 160ft on June 27. Staffordshire fire crews joined West Midlands colleagues at the site off Kingsford Lane as a total of six crews arrived including specialist teams from Cannock fire station. They joined crews from Wombourne, Stour-

bridge, Brierley Hill, Haden Cross and Dudley. Firefighters used two hoses to try and douse the flames and beaters to stop the spread.

Station Commander Steve Andrews said: "We have been experiencing dry, warm weather and it is only natural to want to go outdoors and enjoy it with family and friends but it is also important to stay fire aware, as every year fire destroys thousands of acres of countryside and wildlife habitats."

One-way road system during resurfacing

A STRETCH of a busy Black Country road will be made temporarily one-way next month to allow resurfacing work to take place.

Carriageway resurfacing work is set to take place in Hagley Road, Stourbridge, between Glasshouse Hill and Worcester Lane.

In order to carry out essential work, this section of Hagley Road will become one-way southbound, away from Stourbridge town centre. The work will take place July 12 to 13 and July 16 to 19, from 9.30am to 3pm each day. Two-way flow will be reinstated when work is finished each day.

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for environmental services, said: "This is an essential piece of work on a well-used road, which is why we're looking to put this one-way system in place when traffic flow is lighter, between 9.30am and 3pm each day. We hope to minimise disruption to motorists, and ask road users to bear with us during the work."

Letters will be going out to affected residents and businesses.

Signage will also be going up to advise motorists. Homes and businesses will be accessible, except when work is being undertaken on the immediate entrances to businesses.

Access to frontages will be maintained where safe to do so.

£455k price tag on property with flats

A LARGE property in Stourbridge town centre is up for auction with a guide price of more than £450,000.

The 14-room house of separate flats off Envile Street, Stourbridge, has been listed for a guide price of £455,000 by SDL Auctions.

It will be for sale at Aston Villa FC on July 18.

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Heatwave? Time to call the winter warmer line

EXCUSE the low standard of photography. Unfortunately the blistering sunshine caused by the longest heatwave since 1976 meant there was a lot of reflective glare in the windows of Dudley Council's offices when I took this picture.

Anyway, if you can't see it clearly, it is a poster warning about the dangers of living in a cold home. Apparently it's bad for your health, with children particularly at risk of bronchitis, asthma and mental health problems. It's so bad that the council has set up a winter warmth hotline. If you are shivering in your freezing home this week, don't hesitate to dial 01384 817086. That's local government for you. On the ball as ever. □□□

JOHN SPARRY, the popular Black Country historian, broadcaster and raconteur, has written a book about some of the interesting characters from his old school, King Edward VI Grammar, in Stourbridge.

He certainly has plenty of material. While the book focuses largely on literary figures, the father of the modern dictionary, Samuel Johnson, writers Bob Adey and David Gray, as well as the cartoonist Paul Sellers, former pupils include Battle of Britain hero Mike Cooper-Slipper, actor Anthony Bates, and rock star Robert Plant.

Our school days invariably leave a big impression on our lives. Which is why I was saddened to learn that my old school, High Arcal in Dudley, is to change its name to Beacon Hill Academy.

Now while my old school hardly compares with King Ed – founded in 1961 rather than 1552, and its notable alumni limited to a couple of politicians and a diplomat – the High Arcal name has served it perfectly well for 57 years, so why change it now?

Even more depressingly, the old Dudley Grammar School, which traces its history back to 1452, is changing its name for the second time in less than 30 years. Renamed Castle High School in 1989, it will now be St James's Academy.

The former Willenhall Comprehensive a few years ago changed its name to the funkier E-Act Academy. Last year it received a less-than-glowing Ofsted report, in no small part down to the fact that its pupils threw food at the inspectors. Good to know rebranding did the trick.

Water, water everywhere...but for how long?



Paul Whitehouse and Bob Mortimer – old pals act with a different angle



Nye Bevan – as Britain marks 70 years of his NHS, we stand on the threshold of Brexit



John Cleese during his Monty Python heyday, but would he get the gig on today's BBC?

Sting in the tale of a British heatwave

THE worms may be shrivelling and the frogs dehydrating but one species is having a vintage year. I give you the horse fly, that drab little lover of human flesh. A couple of days ago one drove its pointy thing deep into my knee. From past experience this will create a scab, to be prodded and picked for months to come and providing harmless entertainment as the nights draw in. A horse-fly bite, the gift that keeps on giving.

I CANNOT be the only one genuinely surprised that there is not a nationwide hospice ban. It's like the savannah out there.

SAD to see so many sufferers attending the National Amnesia Day march in London. There were about 100,000 of them, all calling for a "People's Vote," having entirely forgotten we had it two years ago. Poor devils.

IT'S always good to see old friends having a laugh, as Bob Mortimer and Paul Whitehouse do in Gone Fishing (BBC2). And yet for outsiders the old mystery of coarse fishing is as perplexing as ever. You spend hours catching the fish and taking it out of the water. Then you put it back in again. Hmm.

THERE is life beyond London and I bet many of us on the blasted heath we call the provinces are puzzled at the time, money and energy spent on the future of Heathrow. How many Brits actually use the place? Since the 1970s I have flown all over the world on dozens of occasions for business, holidays and with the

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



military but I doubt if I've used Heathrow more than two or three times. The UK has lots of other places where airliners can take off and land perfectly well, so why this obsession with cramming so many eggs into one basket?

WHITEHALL has decided not to build five new female prisons but to erect much cheaper "residential centres" instead. This reflects a view deeply held in the criminal-justice system, that men are evil but women just have syndromes. Ironically, the announcement of the new facilities came the day after Sabrina Kouider and her boyfriend were jailed for life at the Old Bailey for the murder, after 12 days of "pitiless" torture, of their au pair. They burned the body in their garden. Pure evil may be rarer among females than males but it undeniably exists and should be locked away for years, not in some cosy semi-hotel but behind the iron bars of a good, old-fashioned jail.

BY pure chance, the struggle to get out of the clutches of the European Union coincides with events to mark the 70th anniversary of Britain embracing the National Health Service. The NHS was a step into the unknown. It divided the nation. It was opposed by many "experts" who backed down only when Nye Bevan famously

"stuffed their mouths with gold." The result, in global terms, is a middling sort of health service which is not terribly expensive and is good in some parts, but poor in others. We are supposed to be very proud of it, yet we all have our horror stories about it. But on balance we're glad we took the step into the NHS. And I dare say Brexit will be much the same. Not perfect but better than what we had before.

POSTERS for a pub beer and gin festival remind me how popular gin has become recently. On holiday, I couldn't help noticing that the brilliant little village store in Corfe Castle boasts of having 100 brands of gin. This may answer an old question: what do folk in sleepy holiday villages do during the long, dark winters?

IS he having a laugh? Head of BBC Comedy Shane Allen says the Monty Python team would not make it on the Beeb today because they are 'six Oxfordshire white blokes'. But I can't recall a time when humour has been so dominated by upmarket white performers. Stand-up comedy, once the preserve of working-class comics, is now the happy hunting ground of privately-educated stars. A study of 42 episodes of Have I Got News For You (BBC) revealed that all but one of the guests had been to private schools. Maybe things are changing but I bet if John Cleese, Eric Idle, Michael Palin and the rest of the Pythons graduated from uni tomorrow, they'd be snapped up by today's comedy producers because, whatever we may think about privilege, posh is still popular.

TALKING POINT



Upwardly mobile pupil gets top marks

THE name Andreea-Denisa Ciubotaru is hardly one that rolls off the tongue. However, the teenager should be commended.

Regular Talking Point readers may recall a colleague's view on mobile phone use around the dining table, making the point that social time was disrupted by people checking for messages, sending texts or using Facebook, for example, when conversation should be flowing between friends or family.

So it is heartening to hear 16-year-old Andreea-Denisa willingly go without her mobile phone during class time. The schoolgirl, from Barking, asked her headteacher to put her iPhone in the school safe so she could study for exams without being distracted by selfies. The device spent a month locked away and the move looked to have paid off with her GCSE grades predicted to rise from a C to an A. She was quoted as saying: "Everyone knows how addictive phones can be. I've told all my friends to get rid of theirs."

It comes as the head of schools' regulatory body Ofsted backed headteachers who ban phones in class, citing their use as being responsible for unruly behaviour.

Amanda Spielman says the use of smartphones in the classroom is 'dubious' at best and is not convinced of the educational benefits of Snapchat and the like. Culture secretary Matt Hancock has backed the stance, admitting he admires school heads who prevent pupils from using phones all day.

There's no doubt that phones can have an educational appeal and can be a valuable revision tool. But out of school time and away from the desk, please.

Can any child really say they use mobiles sensibly while at school? I would need to argue that a primary school child's need for a phone is minimal anyway. Certainly, older children, who make their own way to and from school, or who may need to stay behind, would require them to keep in touch with parents.

But I do wonder what these children with their fancy gadgets do at break times. Probably texting or keeping up to date with social media instead of properly interacting with their friends like we did.

It's no coincidence that even Silicon Valley executives send their children to technology-free schools, while Bill Gates and Steve Jobs limited screen time for their own children knowing how addictive they could be. Schools in this country should take heed and keep phones out of the classroom.

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from mesothelioma in the world and the World Health Organisation estimates that 125 million people around the world are annually exposed to asbestos in the workplace. Around 100,000 workers die each year from asbestos-related disease.

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daily rota of two in the mornings and two in the afternoons. We need cheery volunteers to help sort donations, steaming and arranging clothes, maybe pricing and selling items.

From our shop and events we raise money for Mesothelioma UK, and Asbestos Support Central England. If there is anyone who would enjoy helping us, please call on 01384 457879 or call into our shop at 6 and 8 New Street, Dudley.

MARY LAW
ARCADE
Dudley

Bid to find family of RAF pilot

I wonder if your readers can help me trace any living relatives of Kenneth Rowland Wainwright. He was a sergeant in the RAF during World War Two, and the pilot of a Whitley bomber from RAF Topcliffe. The crew all died when the aircraft was shot down over Holland on the night of June 13, 1941.

We know that he was from Toronto, Canada, and his father was Job Henry Wainwright. Online research discloses that the Wainwright family were from the Stafford, Sedgley, Stourbridge and Dudley areas.

Another of the crew was my uncle, Geoffrey Vivian Heslop, and my family and I have been researching his life and particularly his RAF career. We have found many interesting facts relating to the crew's last mission and would like to share them with Kenneth Wainwright's close family. I can be contacted on jjfrankpitt@gmail.com

MRS JENNY FRANKPITT
Axbridge

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
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EMAIL

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If you are unhappy with the accuracy of a story, write to The Editor, Chronicles, 51-53 Queen Street, London, EC4M 7LG

Poor roads and big trucks are to blame

WHEN I was young and indeed when I first started driving, I don't remember any potholes at all.

Could the problem be with the way roads are made nowadays? Also, the vehicles using the roads nowadays certainly do not help the situation. In those days of rigid, the most number of axles in general was four. Compare that to the artics now using the roads with up to nine axles and scrubbing the road surfaces.

Is there a simple solution to the problem? I think not as we consumers are feeding the need for these sort of trucks. Perhaps an answer would be to get more goods moved by rail, but where are the rail lines anymore?

LEN HALES
Cradley Heath

Fresh view on homes for elderly

IN response to Mr C Lloyd from last week's Letters, not all care homes should be labelled the same.

I attended the relaunch at Myles Court in Brierley Hill where the not-for-profit owners have invested a lot of time and money in ensuring the Court is a pleasant and welcoming place to live.

Speaking with the residents it was very clear that most had chosen to live there and were happy to speak to anyone about how much they appreciated the managers and staff.

Housing and Care 21 puts every bit of profit back into the improvements needed to look after an ageing population.

Hopefully the old fashioned concept where the elderly are wheeled into a room all day in front of a TV and then go back to their room only at night can be part of the past soon with the help of businesses.

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8 Festival honours the struggle for women's rights

THE proud history of chainmaking in the Black Country will be celebrated this weekend.

The Chainmakers' Festival in Cradley Heath, which has been running for more than a decade, was inspired by the 1910 struggle for a minimum wage by the women chainmakers of the town, led by Mary Macarthur.

The event has the distinction of being the first trade festival dedicated to female trade unionists.

Eleanor Smith, MP for Wolverhampton South West, and Sarah Carpenter, the Unite union's head of health, will be amongst the guest speaker at the event on Saturday. It will also feature music, comedy, street theatre, stalls, children's activities and a fun fair.

Activities will be split across two sites, with activities taking place on Cradley Heath High Street, culminating in a Workers' Picnic in Mary Macarthur Gardens.

TUC Midlands' regional secretary Lee Barron said: "We are delighted that we have leading trade unionists and politicians joining us for the festival. This year is a special year as we mark 100 years of female suffrage."

"As ever, it is absolutely right that we celebrate the role of female trade unionists and to use events such as the Chainmakers' Festival to continue to raise awareness of the challenges facing women today."

Concert celebrates 100 years of vote

A COFFEE concert at a town centre Halesowen church will celebrate 100 years since women got the vote.

The Pankhurst Anthem will be performed as part of the concert in St John the Baptist Church in High Street on Saturday, July 21, at 10.15am.



Beach party for Jacy Blunt, aged four, and Lucy Gamage from Dudley



Having fun in the sun at Himley under-5s day



Punch & Judy man Ron Popple with Bobby Thompson and Lyndsey Griffiths



Having an 'a maze in' time is Vida McNeela, four, from Tipton



Craft fun for Amber Stanley from Oldbury



Donkey rides for Krishna Khanna, three, and Karmen Khanna, at Himley Hall

Fun in the sun for under-fives

THOUSANDS turned out to enjoy the sun and fun at the annual under 5s day on Friday at Himley Hall and Park.

the popular Dudley Council event, which featured activities and entertainment for young children.

The park's specially brought in beach made a popular return with many children having bucket and spade fun building sandcastles

whilst elsewhere little ones laughed along in delight at the Punch and Judy Shows. The land train, donkey rides and children's funfair also went down well with youngsters.

Councillor Ian Kettle, cabinet member responsible for tourism,

said: "What a perfect day we've had for under 5s day. The sun shone and our younger visitors have enjoyed a fantastic day out in the beautiful grounds of Himley Hall.

"Thanks to everyone who came along to support the event and to all

the organisations that helped make the day such a success.

Other activities during the day included Baby & Toddler Sense, Music Bugs, Rugby Tots, Creation Station, Kung fu cubs, Moo music, Hartbeeps and Baby Ballet.

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Ryan made us proud and he deserves justice

HE was a young, ambitious businessman who had his whole life ahead of him.

Ryan Passey had his family, girlfriend, friends, his own business and money saved for a home of his own.

But the 24-year-old's life was tragically cut short during a night out with friends in Stourbridge last August.

What exactly happened in Chicago's nightclub is still a mystery. But what is known is that there was a fracas and Ryan suffered a fatal wound to the chest.

A funeral service was held at St James's Church in Wollaston, Stourbridge. Hundreds turned out, including many of his former teammates from Stourbridge and Wrens Nest football clubs.

Tributes

Touching tributes were made before a solemn gathering at the Raven Pub, in Brierley Hill – a pub Ryan went to on the night he died.

Speaking from her home in Brierley Hill, Gillian Taylor, aged 52, said: "You just loved being in his company, you were in awe of him, he was laughing and smiling, always joking. Everyone he spoke to he made friends with – you couldn't ask for a better child. He saved too, he was going to buy his own house. He never bought any trouble."

Ryan's step-father Phil, 51, said: "A lot of people didn't even know Ryan, but the amount of love that's been shown has been overwhelming, it's that which has kept us all going." Ryan's father Ada, 54, said: "Ryan was so popular, he had so many friends, it has helped us all pull together."

Following Ryan's death, 19-year-old Kobe Murray was arrested and later



Family campaign – Ada, Gill and Phil with a photograph of Ryan

charged with murder and manslaughter. A two-week trial at Birmingham Crown Court took place in January. The jury found Mr Murray, of The Broadway, Dudley, not guilty of both charges. Mr Murray admitted stabbing Ryan but said it happened accidentally as he went to push him away. He said the knife belonged to a friend.

Since the ruling, the family has launched a campaign called Justice For Ryan. It is calling for a change in law to allow for victims or their fam-

ilies to challenge a jury's decision on acquittal. "We believe it is wrong how a person convicted can appeal, but then a victim cannot make an appeal" said Phil.

Stourbridge MP Margot James wrote to Attorney General Robert Buckland questioning the decision.

The family have launched a petition backing their campaign. If it gets 100,000 signatures, it will be debated in Parliament. See www.change.org/p/justice-for-ryan-ryan-s-law



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Choir's champion recital for golfing celebrities

A SCHOOL choir put in a championship-winning performance at one of Europe's major sporting events.

Students from the Windsor Academy Trust Choir, in Halesowen, were special guests at Wentworth Club, in Surrey, to perform during the BMW PGA Championship.

The youngsters sang a range of musical hits – from the Greatest Showman to Tina Turner – to entertain guests of the Golf Foundation, the national child-centred golf charity that helps young people from all backgrounds and circumstances to enjoy the playing and personal benefits of the sport.

After their performance, pupils were taken on a special tour of the golf course to watch some of the celebrities and top golfers taking part in the tournament.

They also met the likes of singing stars Niall Horan and Ronan Keating, as well as former Formula One racing driver Damon Hill.

Rose Alexander, the academy's lead practitioner for music, said: "We were honoured to be asked to sing at this event and the Golf Foundation made us so welcome."

"It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for our pupils and they will always remember it."



Windsor Academy Trust Choir pictured with former Boyzone singer Ronan Keating at Wentworth

Property prices have trebled in 18 years

PROPERTY prices in Dudley have almost trebled in the last 18 years, new figures have revealed.

A study has found the average price of a property in the borough went up 189 per cent, from £58,898 to £170,126 – a difference of £111,228.

It is a similar story across the Black Country. Price increases were even higher in Walsall, which has seen a 198 per cent increase since the year 2000 while in West Bromwich there has been a 204 per cent rise.

In Wolverhampton, prices have gone up 183 per cent, in Stafford, 189 per cent and in Cannock, 193 per cent.

Ron Darlington, partner at property auctioneer SDL Bigwood, said: "There is currently huge demand in the Black Country."

He said property prices had probably gone up faster in West Bromwich and Walsall due to first-time buyers from Birmingham and Solihull looking to neighbouring areas.

Concern

Dudley was ranked 79th out of 100 areas for property price increases in the study carried out by HouseSimple.com.

Southend, Bristol and Cambridge came top of the rankings. In Southend, property prices had increased by 291 per cent.

There is concern among some that the rising prices are forcing young people trying to get on the property ladder out of the market.

However Dudley Council set a target in 2014 for

Motability vehicles on display at NEC

THE country's biggest display of vehicles for disabled people will be on show at The Big Event at Birmingham's NEC.

Taking place tomorrow (Friday) and Saturday, The Big Event offers disabled motorists and their families the chance to investigate the Motability Scheme. Free to attend and with free parking, it is the Motability Scheme's flagship event this summer.

Visitors will be able to get behind the wheel alongside a driving instructor and test drive a range of vehicle. Guests can book a test drive on the day if they have their full driving licence. For the first time, Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle passenger taster experiences will also be available. See the website motability.co.uk/thebigevent for more details.

United faiths work recognised by PCC

A GROUP of religious leaders are to be recognised by police chiefs for their efforts in bringing together divided communities.

Faithful Friends, made up of Sikhs, Muslims and Christians, formed in 2015 in an attempt to unify people in the Smethwick area. Their work has been shortlisted for the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner's Award.

Last year members began taking each other on a tour of their 'special spiritual places' in an attempt to build understanding between faiths. Locations ranged from a field in Cornwall to Amritsar in India, and even included a holiday camp. The group has also linked with schools via social media, filmed each visit and made videos that are now being shared in a bid to bring people together.

Commissioner David Jamieson said: "This project sums up everything that is good about the West Midlands"

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CAMPAIGNERS are battling proposals for a 750-place girls' boarding school in Stourbridge which they fear will be built on green belt land.

Proposals to create the UK's first all girls' state boarding school have been revealed by Old Swinford Hospital school.

Neighbours and campaigners from the Save Stourbridge Green Belt group fear the possible site on Norton Road will lead to loss of land, although no planning application has yet been made.

Public consultation events will be held at Old Swinford Hospital on July 16, 18 and 19.

A spokesman for Old Swinford Hospital confirmed the Thomas Foley Foundation owns the land opposite the Roman Catholic graveyard on Norton Road, near Racecourse Lane junction.

A statement on the school's website said: "We are proposing to establish an 11-16 all girls' school in the borough of Dudley under the Government's free schools programme."

"The school will be open to girls of all faiths and none."

Cricket club will be hosting beer festival

HALESOWEN Cricket Club is holding a beer festival next weekend, following the huge success of last year's sold out debut event.

The festival kicks off at 6pm on Friday, July 13, in a marquee at the Grange Road club which will be stocked with more than 30 varieties of beer, 20 varieties of cider, plus gin and prosecco bar.

There will be food available, live music and matches involving the first XI on the Saturday versus Tamworth, with opponents to be announced for the Sunday's T20 league fixture.

Drinking swimming pool water left young woman in coma

Rock of ages in park honours Bert



With the stone are Bert Bissell's nephew Colin Bissell, left, and Stephen Briscoe, chairman of Friends of Buffery Park

A FRIENDSHIP stone was unveiled in memory of Dudley peace campaigner Bert Bissell, who scaled Ben Nevis more than 100 times in a lifetime dedicated to the service of others.

The memorial stone was unveiled in Buffery Park on Saturday in memory of Mr Bissell, MBE, who first led a pilgrimage party from his Bible class to the summit of Ben Nevis on VJ Day in 1945.

The stone had stood in Vicar Street

for many years but was recently refurbished and was unveiled at its new home by the Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Alan Taylor.

The event was organised by the Bert Bissell Memorial Society and Friends of Buffery Park. It will now sit alongside a board giving details of Mr Bissell's life and achievements. The unveiling event was attended by local dignitaries, family and friends, including Bert's nephew.

Dudley-born Bert Bissell died 20 years ago, aged 96. He lived at Selborne Road and founded the Young Men's Bible Class, in Vicar Street. He was a probation officer and climbed Ben Nevis many times, constructing a Peace Cairn at its summit.

Ben Nevis has been climbed every year for five years by Dudley people keen to honour his legacy and raise money for charities. The next climb takes place on August 16.

A NURSE has been suspended after a woman in her care drank water from a swimming pool in Dudley, leaving her with serious brain injuries.

The 22-year-old, who has the mental age of a young child, would drink water 'excessively' and was unable to tell the difference between drinking water and water in the pool. Nurse Carole Halstead was chatting to a colleague as the woman drank from the pool at Dudley Leisure Centre, a Nursing and Midwifery Council disciplinary hearing was told.

The woman fell into a coma after vomiting. Doctors said her life expectancy was significantly reduced and she was totally dependent on carers.

Freetime Care Services, of which Mrs Halstead is a director, expressed 'deep remorse' after the incident in July 2014. However, it said Mrs Halstead was considering appealing.

Warned

The woman's mother said she warned the carer three times to limit her then teenage daughter's session to 10 minutes because of her habit of drinking the pool water. Mrs Halstead was seen chatting as the woman drank the pool water during a session claimed to last 40 minutes.

Mrs Halstead denied being told about the 10-minute rule but admitted not preparing an adequate risk assessment.

The panel found she had failed to prevent the woman consuming too much water and failed to limit pool time to 10 minutes. The panel suspended the nurse of 24 years for 12 months.

Halesowen-based Freetime Care Services said: "Freetime and Carole Halstead would like to express their sincere apologies to the family. Freetime is taking every step possible to improve their processes."

Arrests after series of raids on Domino's

THREE people have been arrested after four Domino's pizza takeaways were broken into in one night.

Branches in Rowley Regis, Wednesbury, Stafford and Rugeley were all targeted in the early hours of Monday.

Andrew David Bowering, aged 24, of Gomer Street, Willenhall, and Michael Colin Watkins, aged 35, of Wednesfield Road, Willenhall, have both been charged with four counts of burglary.

Bowering was remanded in custody due to appear before magistrates this week while Watkins was granted conditional bail and is due to appear before Cannock magistrates on August 1.

Debbie Samantha Anderson, aged 35, of Toll End Road, Tipton, was charged with four counts of conspiring to commit burglary. She was granted conditional bail to appear at Cannock Magistrates Court on July 18.

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Boxer given payout for missed aneurysm

HE is a former professional boxing champion but has faced his toughest battle outside the ring.

Darren McDermott, aged 39, from Dudley, has received a substantial payout after a screening company failed to spot a potentially fatal brain aneurysm.

The rising star was sparring with former two-time world light-heavyweight champion Nathan Cleverly when the aneurysm ruptured.

Just five months before, the Black Country Bodysnatcher, was given the 'all-clear' and re-licensed to box, following his British Boxing Board of Control (BBBoC) mandated annual medical and MRI scan.

The aneurysm ruptured following a blow to Darren's head. He continued to feel unwell for almost a week before it was detected by specialists at Russells Hall Hospital.

He was then taken for emergency surgery to stem a bleed on his brain at the Birmingham Queen Elizabeth hospital.

Rehabilitation

The incident left the former British middleweight champion, who had won 17 of his 20 fights, needing specialist support and rehabilitation, and suffering short-term memory loss.

He was told shortly after surgery he would not be able to box again, which he described as 'heartbreaking'.

Darren said: "I was destroyed, it felt like the end of the world. I came home and lost my driving licence, lost my boxing licence, I just didn't know what to do with myself."

"I was in a bad place. For me to retire because I thought I was too old or not good enough would have been ac-



Former boxer Darren McDermott, 39, from Dudley, has received a payout acceptable. But for somebody to just take it away from me and tell me you can't box anymore was just heartbreaking.

"I started drinking, smoking, just not being me."

Following the incident in 2010 the father of two and his wife Claire wanted to investigate if the condition should have been detected earlier. He instructed specialist medical negligence lawyers Irwin Mitchell to investigate whether the pre-existing aneurysm should have been detected during routine testing.

InHealth Ltd was the company appointed by the BBBoC to manage the process of obtaining and checking all professional boxers' MRI scans for re-licensing purposes. It has agreed to pay the couple a substantial settlement after admitting liability for Darren's injuries.

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Motability show to feature 100 cars

THE school discos of our yesteryear are well and truly assigned to the history books for the modern generation.

When school's out for students today they do not head for the hall in jeans and T-shirt to enjoy warm pop and a 'funky' teacher hitting the decks. Instead, they put on their ballgowns and black tie glamour for a night to remember - the school prom.

Dress hunting is a serious business

as all girls want to be the belle of the ball. And it's not just about dressing to impress. Transport is almost as important as youngsters strive to make the biggest impression.

So how much is this fairytale once-in-a-lifetime evening likely to set parents back? Well latest figures suggest we will spend an average of £500 on a daughter for prom night - and many will spend that on the dress alone. But

with a tear in their eye and proudly clicking away with the camera, most parents will no doubt think it is money well spent.

Send us your pictures from these milestone events and we will carry as many as possible in the paper.

Email your picture with names of those in the snapshot as well as details of the school and where the event was to sue.attwater@expressandstar.co.uk



Transport is almost as important

Taking place tomorrow, Friday and Saturday, it offers disabled motorists and their families the chance to investigate the Motability Scheme, with free admission and free parking.

Free to attend and with free parking, it is the Motability Scheme's flagship event this summer.

The Motability Scheme provides affordable motoring to more than 600,000 disabled customers and their families. More details are available at motability.co.uk/thebigevent.

Drug driving up over two years

DRUG-DRIVING offences in the West Midlands have more than doubled in just two years, according to new research.

A total of 1,231 drivers were charged with driving under the influence of drugs in 2017, up from 533 in 2015.

This includes consumption of illegal, prescription and over-the-counter drugs, which could have an impact on a motorist's ability to drive, such as chlorphenamine, hydroxyzine or promethazine - all types of antihistamines to curb symptoms of hay fever.

In total, more than 6,300 UK drivers have been caught under the influence of drugs in 2017.

Investment brings jobs to the region

OVERSEAS firms pumping money into West Midlands businesses helped create more than 9,400 jobs last year, new figures reveal.

Despite fears over the impact of Brexit talks, the latest figures from the Department for International Trade show increasing numbers of new projects involving foreign direct investment, or FDI.

There were 171 new projects across the region last year - the most for three years, bringing in 9,424 jobs.

Baggies' Bob tees up top golf prize

FORMER Baggies goalkeeper Bob Ward won a charity golf day made up of ex-players. Mr Ward, who made 10 appearances for West Bromwich Albion from 1973 to 1977, took part in the annual golf day at Walsall Golf Club.

It was organised by the West Bromwich Albion Former Players Association. The team winner was one made up of workers at CPC Civils Ltd in Solihull.

After Brazil Sue takes on India via bicycle



Getting ready for a mammoth charity bike ride through India later this year is fundraiser Sue Harris, of Lye

SUE Harris cycled across Brazil in October last year, raising thousands for a cancer charity, and now the 69-year-old, from Lye, will be cycling in India to raise funds for Women V Cancer.

Mrs Harris raised £4,500 for the charity in 2017, now hopes to raise a further £3,500 by joining a group on a fundraising mission to the sub-continent.

The campaign hits close to home for Mrs Harris, whose mother Hilda Hickey had stomach cancer, but died due to unrelated issues aged 42.

Mrs Harris will ride an average 50 miles a day through New Delhi, Agra and Rajasthan November.

Mrs Harris is urging people to attend a charity race night at the Quality Hotel in Dudley, tomorrow (Friday) for Women V Cancer.

Tickets priced at £5 are available from Mrs Harris on 07870 546843. Go to justgiving.com/fundraising/sue-harris18 to donate.

STOURBRIDGE MP Margot James has welcomed plans to build homes on a disused former college site which has been blighted by vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Persimmon Homes has submitted an application to build 62 homes on the derelict Longlands School site in Bowline Green Road, Stourbridge.

The site has been empty since Birmingham Metropolitan College closed the Stourbridge College campus at the old school site in 2011.

The buildings, in a residential area, have been plagued by fires and other anti-social behaviour since then, including a major blaze two years ago.

The Conservative MP has welcomed the fresh proposals and has also called on Dudley Council to ensure that the green space adjacent to the site is brought back into community use.

She said: "I welcome this news, which has been a long time coming. The development would see the building of much-needed homes in our area, including affordable homes, and solve issues of anti-social behaviour at the site."

Brutal bully is sent to prison for 22 months

A 'BRUTAL' bully with a history of violence against women has been jailed for 22 months for beating up his girlfriend.

Jason Kinsey, aged 34, had been drinking all day on May 28 when he launched the attack on May 28, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

Kinsey ran at the woman while her back was turned and kicked her legs from under her, sending her crashing to the floor. She suffered facial injuries.

The following day he attacked her again, this time while the victim was at his father's home in Himley Road, Dudley.

Mr Howard Searle, prosecuting, said Kinsey flicked a burning cigarette at the woman before grabbing a knife, which he repeatedly plunged into the wall beside her. He then spat at her.

Drunken

Kinsey, from Duke Street, Gornal, had 27 previous convictions involving 51 separate offences which included a drunken attack on a former partner. He had also been convicted of a stabbing.

Mrs Kam Shergill, defending, said: "This had been a short-lived, volatile relationship during which there was a lot of arguing and drinking. He could have handled the situation better. He accepts that the relationship is over."

Kinsey pleaded guilty to assault and criminal damage and was jailed for a total of one year ten months. Judge Barry Berlin told him: "You are a brutal bully."

Kinsey was also made the subject of a restraining order banning any contact with the victim or his father.

Stour ale will help river to improve

A NEW beer being brewed in Lye will help raise funds for a project to improve the River Stour.

Sadler's Brewery is producing Salmon in the Stour, a bitter made with Worcestershire and Herefordshire hops. For each cask ordered £10 will be donated to the project to improve the River Stour, which flows through the Black Country.

The project has been set up to tackle water quality and litter whilst improving access for people and enhancing habitats so wildlife like otters and salmon can thrive.

Chris Sadler, managing director of Sadler's Brewery, said: "Our brewery is right on the River Stour. Sadler's, along with many other local businesses, rely on it. Salmon in the Stour is a great project."



There are different photographs of nurses at the Royal Hospital, Wolverhampton



Roy Stallard with an 1848 nurses water jug



Nebulisers



Children's oxygen tubes designed to look like spectacles



An early bedpan



An early enema

MP welcomes homes at former college site



Stourbridge MP Margot James

"A full public consultation will be conducted and I have been pressing Persimmon Homes to engage with the community during this process. I will also chair a public meeting to allow local residents to come and meet the developers and discuss these plans."

"I know residents are concerned about green space, so I call on the council to ensure that the land between the former school site and Albert Street is maintained for the benefit of the community."

Light relief after man rescued off lamp post



The fire service in action after the man climbed the lamp post.
Picture: West Midlands Fire Service/Handsworth Fire Station

A MAN thought to have taken an illegal high became stuck at the top of a lamp post and had to be helped down by firefighters. A member of the public called 999 to alert emergency services to the scene in Birmingham.

Somehow the man had scaled the 32ft (10m) lamp and became stranded at the top for up to an hour.

Two fire crews were called to Grove Lane near Holly Road, Handsworth, and used a hydraulic platform to reach the man and bring him down.

A spokesman said they had no idea how he got there.

The fire service tweeted he had taken an "illegal high" and the incident could have "ended very differently."

West Midlands Ambulance Service said they were called to reports of a man in "a precarious position at the top of a lampost" just before 10pm on Saturday.

He was treated for a hand injury and taken to Sandwell Hospital.

Bedsits may come in above shops row

A ROW of properties running over shops in Bearwood will be turned into bedsits, under new plans.

Elevens separate plans have been lodged to convert a huge part of the high street on Bearwood Road into houses of multiple occupation, but the move has sparked concern from a councillor.

But the proposals by applicant Green Room Properties Limited have sparked concern from a councillor who fears the plan is 'over-development'.

The plans were due to be discussed at Sandwell Council's planning committee meeting, which was held yesterday, but councillors look set to visit the site before allowing the scheme to go ahead.

Councillor Bob Piper, ward councillor for the area and also who sits on the committee, said there is no parking facilities for the bedsits in an area where parking is at a "premium".

The applications are for the proposed change of use and refurbishment of first and second floors to accommodate a house in multiple

By Dayna Farrington

occupation with four single occupancy rooms, together with bicycle parking facilities, refuse and recycling storage and an external staircase to the rear.

Councillor Piper said: "I sit on the planning committee but I have given notice of my intention to remove myself from the committee in order to object to these plans."

A report to the committee said: "The application has been reported to the committee at an early stage to enable members to visit the site. This is a summary report only and does not seek to assess the proposals. A full report will be prepared for the committee meeting on August 8."

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Attract more visitors by making your own birdbath



IT'S not just plants that thrive in gardens, birds love them – and they love them even more when there's a birdbath to visit.

Water helps keep a bird's body cool both from the inside and outside. Offering water in your garden will attract more birds than just those looking for food, since birds that would not normally visit feeders can be tempted by water features.

Birds fly to birdbaths for the water they need -- for drinking and for grooming – and while they are there they will hunt for the insects, worms, seeds and flower parts they like to eat.

In the process they will help aerate the soil, help tidy up dead plant material and help keep plants healthy as they devour pests.

The best birdbaths are normally shallow with sloping sides, rather than deep pools of water.

The shallow pitch lets smaller birds wade in, where they can stand up and clean their feathers instead of having to jump in.

Leave plenty of open space around the birdbath as well, so that birds can see any predators from far off. Also, place the birdbath near a perch of some sort, such as a small open tree or on a trellis or arbor. That lets birds scan the horizon from high up before swooping in to the bath.

Simplest

The simplest birdbath is a terracotta plant pot saucer with some small stones – and is very easy to make yourself.

Just grab a large terracotta plant pot and saucer, some all-purpose glue for outside use and some rounded stones (about the size of a plum).

Turn the pot upside down and scrub the base clean. Then apply a generous layer of waterproof glue to the base.

Place the saucer on the base of the pot, settling it into the glue.

Leave it for 24 hours to ensure that the glue dries thoroughly.

Place the birdbath in a suitable spot, add some stones so birds can perch to drink and then add some fresh, clean water.

The pebbles also provide an escape route for honeybees that are frequent visitors to bird baths as they need water to regulate temperature within the colony on hot summer days.

If pots and containers are just part of your outside space then here are some gardening tips for this month from the Royal Horticultural Society:

- Water tubs and plants, but be water-wise
- Hoe any sun loving weeds
- Place conservatory plants outside now that it is warm
- Deadhead plants to ensure continuous flowering
- Keep ponds topped up and clear of algae
- Order catalogues for next year's spring-flowering bulbs
- Give the lawn a quick-acting summer feed and mow regularly
- Give outside woodwork a lick of paint or preserver, while the weather is dry

Sara Milne
The Potted Garden

Payout plan for issues switching energy suppliers



Ofgem plans to compensate householders who have suffered problems switching energy suppliers

PLANS announced by the regulator Ofgem to compensate householders who have suffered problems switching energy suppliers have been welcomed.

"Any moves to help residents to reduce their bills are good news and long overdue," said green expert Ron Fox, of Noreus Ltd on University of Keele Science and Innovation Park.

Under the scheme companies, who make errors when customers want to switch, such as moving them to the wrong company or being too slow to send a final bill or taking too long to complete the move, will have to pay up to £60 in compensation.

Both the regulator and Ofgem have spent years encouraging people to switch suppliers to get a better energy deal.

But research has shown many people don't bother because they are worried there will be problems or that they tried once before and it didn't work out.

More than five million electricity customers and four million gas customers swapped suppliers last year, but millions more, particularly the elderly, have never switched and are stuck on expensive standard tariffs.

Rob Salter-Church, interim head of consumers and markets at Ofgem, said the automatic compensation would help protect consumers and ensure suppliers get switches right first time.

His comments were supported by Mr Fox, who said those who had switched from a variable rate tariff to a fixed rate

deal would have saved about £376 a year. He encouraged householders to shop around for the cheapest energy deal now as he said it was so easy and particularly as British Gas, Npower and EDF had all put up their prices in the last couple of months.

Firstly, people should enter the tariff and energy usage from their most recent bill on a price comparison website which will suggest the cheapest supplier.

But Mr Fox warned that the lowest price may not always be the best after research by the consumer charity Citizens' Advice found that the bottom 15 places for the worst customer service all went to small companies.

He advised people thinking of moving to a new small provider to then look at three areas.

"Beware of companies who ask you to pay up front for a better deal – they may not have a big enough cash reserve," he said.

"Secondly, if the provider has a poor customer service record it may be struggling with rapid expansion. Finally, make sure the company gives both value for money and has a good trading record."

Meanwhile, for those looking for even more freedom from rising electricity and heating costs, Mr Fox recommended looking at renewable alternatives.

These include rooftop solar photovoltaic panels, which change energy from the sun into domestic electricity, and air source heat pumps.

Bargains can be found – but be wary of pitfalls

Report by Hannah Stephenson

SO, after perusing the very expensive plant sections in your local garden centre, you move on to the discount bench.

You'll often find an array of specimens much more suited to your budget.

But are they worth buying?

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU CHOOSE

Christine Walkden, resident gardening expert of The One Show and author of Christine Walkden's No-Nonsense Container Gardening, says you can bag some fantastic bargains, but you need to be aware of what may end up on the compost heap.

"Garden centres are now clearing their shelves of mainstream bedding and herbaceous plants to get ready for bulbs, which generally come in in August, and then for their Christmas stock," she says.

"If a plant is just reduced because they want to clear the benches, which at this time of year is often the case, you can pick up some real bargains."

As the season began so late this year, there are great bargains to be had, she adds.

SUMMER ANNUALS AT A SNIP

You can now purchase packs of summer annuals for a fraction of their original cost, as well as ready-made hanging baskets and containers, which if kept fed, watered and dead-headed, should last well into September.

CHECK PLANT HEALTH

But you need to check the plant's health before you buy, she warns.

"A lot of things are being reduced, but look carefully at what's being offered," she advises. "I would avoid anything soft, squiddy, obviously diseased or weak, the normal poor quality things."

"If the roots of discounted bedding plants are coming through the bottom of the tray, it's probably best to avoid them as they are likely to have been there a long time and may have been starved."

CONSIDER PERENNIALS WHICH HAVE FINISHED FLOWERING

Plants which are coming into flower or in full bloom are likely to be more expensive, while perennials and shrubs which have finished flowering may well be among the sale items.

"If perennials have just been chopped back and have a good root system, and the roots are white and fleshy, that's another bargain to be had," says Walkden. You can get all-round interest by going into your local garden centre on the same day every month and bagging a bargain, she adds.

WHAT ABOUT BULBS AND SEED POTATOES?

Recently, some centres have been selling off seed potatoes which should have ideally been planted earlier in the year.

Walkden advises: "You can plant seed potatoes until the end of June, while garden centres will be stocking autumn-flowering



Garden centres are full of enticing offers – but are they really worth it?



Acers are pricey – and there are cheaper alternatives

bulbs now – such as sternbergias and Crocus zonatus – which should be planted by late August.

"Bulbs are interesting because you can plant them totally out of season and they will just flower much later," she says.

"If the bulb is sound, with no softness, mould or disease on it and you haven't got round to buying them, then buy them."

"I know lots of people who plant their spring bulbs in December, because they



Give pots with roots protruding a miss

forget, and they'll just flower later."

CONSIDER CHEAPER VARIETIES

There are other ways to save money on garden centre plants. Some specimens may be more expensive than less popular varieties.

Acer, for example, can be extremely pricey, but some argue you can get the same effect with cheaper trees such as cherry or Amelanchier.

Lifting and dividing plants can also be

an economical way of increasing your stock and you can do this with many plants, from dainty-looking astrantia, to tropical-looking hostas, helichrysums, rudbeckias and crocosmias.

Some clumps of bulbs will separate easily, to give you several healthy clumps to replant, while you may need to get a gardening knife to divide other tougher-rooted types like hostas. But leave this job until the plant is dormant, if you can.

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Loyalty

The pub itself boasts a wide range of ciders, lagers, wines and spirits including four 'Real Ales' which they rotate weekly. Regulars very often enjoy ales such as Bathams, AJ Ales, Oakham, JHB, Stairway To Heaven and MA Pardoes Entire, plus many more!

The pub also run a loyalty scheme which means customers can get 10p back on their card for every pound they spend. A pub spokesman added: "With a juke box and free WIFI to compliment the regular entertainment every Friday, customers cannot ask for much more from a local pub!"

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Sinatra and all that jazz for star Curtis

Back in the day, Curtis Stigers was the man with the flowing locks and the pin-up looks. The singer enjoyed a string of chart successes in the early 1990s, including the international smash hits I Wonder Why and You're All That Matters To Me.

And yet becoming part of the international jet set was something that didn't sit well. He was more interested in playing the music close to his heart – jazz and swing – than he was making a dent in the charts.

And so he began an alternative career. Curtis exited the arenas and stadiums into which he'd briefly been placed and started doing the rounds at jazz clubs and bars. That was 17 years ago and his jazzy versions of pop songs have made him ever-popular in the USA and Europe. These days, his records don't make the chart – and that's exactly how he likes it.

He's back on the road with a show that pays homage to the greatest of them all – Frank Sinatra – and will headline Birmingham's Town Hall on July 13 with a show called Sinatra At The Sands, in which he'll perform with The Ronnie Scott's Big Band.

Curtis will channel the hip, swinging chemistry of Frank Sinatra and the Count Basie Orchestra in celebration of the classic album Sinatra At The Sands. It follows the release last year of his latest album, One More For The Road, with the Danish Radio Big Band.

Not that Stigers will party like Ol' Blue Eyes after the show. "I'm old enough to know that I shouldn't have a drink of whisky to end the night. That's always been a downfall for me. The next day is a very bad day if I do that. If I'm going to have something strong, I'm going to start with it. Once I'm done with it, I'm a big fan of a nice glass of red wine, so I'd switch to that. It'd have to be red wine only because I'm too smart to hurt myself as badly as I did when I was young."

OUTSPOKEN

"Listen to me, children! Do not mix drinks at the end of the night. It seems like a great idea when they bring out a bottle of nice Scotch whisky but once they do that, you're in trouble."

Curtis is one of rock'n'roll's more cultured performers. A delightful raconteur and outspoken politico, his Twitter feed is one of the more entertaining that there is.

He frequently rails against the 'poison' of USA President Donald Trump and also tackles such commentators as Katie Hopkins in no-punches-pulled discourse.

"He's just a nightmare for everyone. I think in the long-run, even the people who support him will rue the day that they decided to vote for him. He doesn't care about anybody except himself. He's not about the country. He's not about the people he supposedly represents. He's about making money and getting attention. I don't think he's mentally stable either. We could probably talk about him for hours!"

Curtis's new Sinatra project is close to his heart. He is a huge fan of Sinatra at the Sands, which inspired his album with the Danish Radio Big Band.

"I flew over to rehearse with them for a day,

And we wonder why – Curtis Stigers is taking on Sinatra's hits



drank a couple of Danish beers and I sang a bunch of great material that I have known since I was a kid but hadn't sung as it never occurred to me to sing Sinatra. I've always kind of done my own thing. I had a ball, though. It was a riot.

"A few weeks later someone sent me an email with a link to the recordings for Danish radio, as it had gone out as a broadcast.

"And to be honest, I didn't even listen to it. It took me a couple of weeks to rediscover it. I threw it on when doing some work and I was really surprised by how fresh it sounded and how cool it sounded to hear me singing these songs and arrangements that Sinatra made so famous."

Curtis has led a remarkable life – coming face-to-face with rock excess and meeting his heroes along the way.

"It was wonderful at the time – but you can't spend your life

It's very easy to lose track of reality. They were great times . . .

like that. It's very easy to lose track of reality. They were great times and I got to perform in front of huge numbers of people and meet a lot of my heroes like Eric Clapton, Elton John and Prince. But I wouldn't want to be stuck in the back of a tour bus now – these days I like to keep it low key, it's better to connect to people in each of the places I travel to.

"Different things are important to me now I guess. I've seen plenty of people in my industry lose sight of what's real and what's not. I'd like to think that I have never been like that, I've always tried to keep a grip on what's important."

Andy Richardson

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.

Young Vic's The Jumper Factory



Emphasis on youth at Rep's theatre festival

More than 200 young people from across Europe will unite in Birmingham this summer for a celebration of youth theatre.

Over five days from July 30 to August 3, a total of 14 youth theatre companies will perform as part of For / With / By: Festival of European Youth Theatre at Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

The aim of the festival is to raise awareness of youth theatre work, both in the UK and Europe, and also to celebrate incredible theatre made by young people aged 14 to 25.

The programme includes a broad range of plays from the classic, Antigone, to the topical Windrush-inspired, The Place For Me, with companies from across the UK and also Ireland, Poland and Spain.

Steve Ball, associate director for learning and participation at Birmingham Rep, said: "For / With / By is a celebration of the thousands of young people who take part in youth theatre groups every week across the UK and Europe. Here at The Rep we believe theatre and the chance to participate in high-quality drama activities should be open to every young person."

"Performing, learning and participating in theatre can have life-changing experiences and I think that during the festival you'll not only see some incredible theatre making, you'll also see young people having a real drive and passion for something they have chosen to be part of."

For further information about the shows see www.birmingham-rep.co.uk website.

Be moonstruck by the Lunar line-up



THE Lunar Festival near Birmingham offers an intimate alternative to the summer's mega music fests.

The capacity is 5,000 for the Lunar Festival, named after a group of Birmingham-based 18th century industrialists, philosophers and intellectuals, which is being held at a rural site near the Warwickshire village of Tanworth-In-Arden, after taking a year off in 2017.

Committed to staying small whilst thinking big, the 2018 edition of Lunar Festival is held over the weekend of July 27 to 29. The major music acts will be in action from

Friday to Sunday, following 'early settlers' day on Thursday.

Top of the bill on Friday is Amadou & Mariam, a Grammy-nominated duo from Mali, and the line up also includes the Go! Team, folk group The Unthanks with the songs of Molly Drake, a DJ set from Baement Jaxx and funky Welsh band Boy Azooga, plus others.

Goldfrapp, fronted by Alison Goldfrapp, pictured, headline on Saturday, plus electronic outfit Crazy P, Hookworms and 'Madchester' favourites A Guy Called Gerald, and more. Another eclectic line-up on Sunday is topped by new wave veterans The

Stranglers, with support from Malian band Songhoy Blues, singer-songwriter Jane Weaver, and DJ Mark Radcliffe's Galleon Blast.

"Lunar is 100 per cent dedicated to celebrating the wonderful community of music and art lovers that have supported the festival to date, and we look forward to welcoming friends old and new to this year's edition," said the festival's John Fell.

There is a range of prices with camping and without, and special deals for students and NHS workers. For more information see www.lunarfestival.co.uk website.

Fenn-tastic event for Twin Peaks fans

Sherilyn Fenn, Audrey Horne in cult 1990s TV series Twin Peaks and its sequel Twin Peaks: The Return, is the first special guest announced for MCM Birmingham Comic Con at the NEC on November 24 and 25.

While Fenn has an array of TV and film credits to her name, from Gilmore Girls to the controversial Boxing Helena, the Detroit-born actress is best known as Audrey in David Lynch and Mark Frost's surreal detective drama Twin Peaks. See www.mcmcomiccon.com/birmingham/2018



Hip-hop and pop at Solihull Summer Fest

This year's Solihull Summer Fest is set to be the best yet with a line-up that includes pop legends Busted, Sister Sledge, Blue and 10cc – plus latest X-factor winners, Rak-Su. Now in its third year, thousands at Tudor Grange Park over the August Bank Holiday weekend. The Saturday (August 25) line-up includes disco sensations Sister Sledge, 70s favourites 10cc and 'All Rise' boy band Blue. Also on the bill are X Factor hip-hop sensations Rak-Su, singer and Britain's Got Talent judge Alesha Dixon and Roland Gift from the Fine Young Cannibals. Sunday (August 26) includes the only confirmed gig of 2018 for Busted, plus 'America' hitmakers Razorlight, the Lightning Seeds, The Beat featuring Ranking Roger and The Duhals. Plus special guest rappers the Sugar Hill Gang. Visit www.solihullsummerfest.co.uk

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A spokesman said: "We have to offer, a carvery with a choice freshly roasted meats accompanied by a wide variety of fresh locally sourced vegetables.

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The pub is open daily between Sunday and Friday, from 12pm and 8pm and Saturday from 12noon to 9pm.

Breakfast is available on Friday, Saturday and Sunday between 8.30am and 11am.

The spokesman added: "Whether it's brunch, lunch or dinner you're joining us for, call to reserve your table on (01562) 850311."



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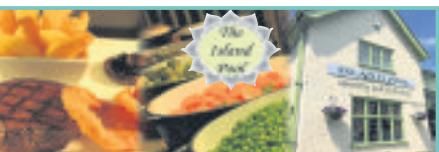
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CHOICE**BBC1**

In the event of live football not being shown, the following schedule is subject to change.

6.00 Breakfast: **10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live:** **11.30** Simply Nigeria. (R) **12.00 BBC News; Weather:** **12.15** Wimbledon 2018. Sue Barker introduces live coverage of day six at the All England Club. **2.30 MOTD Live: FIFA World Cup 2018:** Gary Lineker presents coverage of the third quarter-final (kick-off 3.00pm). **5.15** Wimbledon 2018. Sue Barker presents further coverage of day six.



Jo Whiley

RHS Hampton Court Flower Show 2018 (BBC2, 9.30pm)

On the final day at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show, Carol Klein will be revealing what to plant this weekend for instant results. Arit Anderson has some Hampton-inspired ideas for outside spaces, and Adam Frost explores how to create privacy in a garden. Plus, Toby Buckland meets the winner of Florist of the Year and Nick Bailey looks in detail at a cut-flower favourite, the lily. Introduced by Joe Swift and Jo Whiley.

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BBC2

6.40 Marrying Mum and Dad. **7.10 Officially Amazing Goes Bunkers. (R) 7.40 The Daringheers. (R) **8.10** Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. (R) **8.40** Deadly Dinosaurs with Steve Backshall. (R) **9.10 David Attenborough's Natural Curiosities. (R) **9.30 Second Chance Summer: Tuscany. (R) **10.30 Athletics: Diamond League Lausanne Highlights. 11.30 Wimbledon 2018.********

8.30 Today at Wimbledon: Clare Balding introduces highlights of the sixth day's play at SW19, where the line-up for the last 16 was set to be decided. The middle Saturday is always a special occasion at SW19 and the crowd on Centre Court last year were treated to the sight of Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic progressing to the fourth round with respective straight-set victories over Mischa Zverev and Ernesto Gulbis, while Frenchman Jo-Wilfried Tsonga was dumped out of the tournament on Court Two against American Sam Querry.

9.30 RHS Hampton Court Flower Show 2018: Carol Klein reveals what to plant for instant results, Arit Anderson has ideas for outside spaces, and Adam Frost explores how to create privacy in a garden. Last in the series.

10.00 Joanna & Jennifer: Absolutely Champs. In Absolutely Fabulous, Patsy and Edina were rarely seen without a glass of champagne in their hands. And it turns out their real-life counterparts, comedy collaborators and great friends Joanna Lumley and Jennifer Saunders, also like nothing more than getting together to share a glass of something chilled and bubbly. Now the pair head across the channel to explore the Champagne region of France and find out how the tipple is made. Along the way, they also quiz each other about their lives, revealing previously unheard stories and anecdotes. (R)

11.00 Absolutely Fabulous. A new boyfriend boasting a selection of lost Beatles recordings makes Eddie think she has hit the big time. (R)

11.30 Film: Behind the Candelabra. (2013)

12.00 Film: Populaire. (2012) 3.05 This Is BBC Two.

ITV

In the event of live football not being shown, the following schedule is subject to change.

6.00 CITV: Sooty, 6.10 Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) 6.30 Mission Employable. (R) 6.55 The Oddballs Show. (R) 7.05 Magica. Tournament of Elements. (R) **7.30 The Haunted Hathaways. (R) 7.55 Drop Dead Weird. 8.25 ITV News. 8.30 Zoo Ball on Saturday. 9.25 James Martin's American Adventure. 9.55 Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) **10.55 The Best of the Voice Worldwide. 11.55 ITV News. (R) 12.00 ITV Racing Live from Sandown. Coverage of today's racing at Sandown Park. 2.30 FIFA World Cup 2018. Coverage of the third quarter-final (kick-off 3.00pm). 5.15 Catchphrase. (R)****

6.00 ITV News; Weather.
6.15 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.30 FIFA World Cup 2018: Spain or Russia v Croatia or Denmark (kick-off 7.00pm). Mark Pougatch presents coverage of the fourth quarter-final, which takes place at Fisht Stadium in Sochi, as the semi-final line-up is completed. The teams still left in the competition at this stage know they have a very strong chance of lifting the famous trophy, and the pressure will be on both countries to perform well here. If the expected results had occurred in the group stages and during last week's last-16 encounters, this match may well have been a mouthwatering clash between Spain and Argentina, but Jorge Sampaoli's side just scraped through in second place from their group, and met France in the second round a week ago.

Fernando Hierro – who travelled to four World Cups as a defender for Spain – took over as manager just days before the start of the tournament following Julen Lopetegui's sacking, and guided his side to a memorable 3-3 draw with Portugal, a 1-0 victory over Iran and a 2-2 draw with Morocco in their group games. With commentary by Jonathan Pearce and Danny Murphy.

9.15 Mrs Brown's Boys: Agnes fears her family is planning to send her to a nursing home, when in fact it is Spartacus the dog who is set to be sent away. Comedy, starring Brendan O'Carroll. (R)

9.45 BBC News; Weather, National Lottery Update.

10.05 Film: Avengers: Age of Ultron. (2015) Sci-fi adventure sequel, with Robert Downey Jr.

12.15 MOTD: FIFA World Cup 2018 Replay. 2.00 Weather for the Week Ahead. 2.05 BBC News.

1.00 ITV News; Weather.

1.30 Film: The Bourne Identity. (2002) Thriller, starring Matt Damon.

1.40 Jackpot247. 3.00 Mr Selfridge. (R) 3.50 ITV Nightscreen.

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1.00 ITV News; Weather.

SUNDAY'S TV JULY 8

CHOICE



Rafael Nadal

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Barry Davies' The Man, The Voice, The Legend. (R) **2.00** Just Call Me Martina. (R) **3.00** Escape to the Country. **3.30** Money for Nothing. (R) **4.15** Songs of Praise. **4.50** Attenborough and the Giant Elephant. (R) **5.50** Pointless Celebrities. (R)

6.35 BBC News.

6.50 Regional Programme.

7.00 Countryfile.

Ellie Harrison and Sean Fletcher explore the ground of Hampton Court Palace, home to the last remaining working shire horses in London, which provide a natural alternative to modern machinery. Plus, a look at the finished design for the Countryfile Wildlife Garden to appear at the Hampton Court Flower Show, and Anita Rani and Adam Henson meet two more candidates for the Young Presenter contest.

8.00 Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce presents the show from Cardiff Castle, where items brought in to be valued include a simple pottery jug given as a love token, an early Hockney print found in a junk shop, and a draft score for Elgar's Enigma Variations signed by the composer.

9.00 Poldark. Grain prices rise, leaving the poor struggling to support their families. Ross makes a desperate gamble to help them, which draws the attention of the prime minister. However, Falmouth persuades him to compromise his principles to achieve his goals. Demelza continues her plot to bring Drake and Rosina together, but he is far more interested in a future with Morwenna. Caroline continues to reveal her grief, and Arthur is driven into a murderous rage when he learns the truth about Rowella's affair.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Celebrations on the NHS Frontline. To mark the 70th anniversary of the NHS, four well-known faces get first-hand experience at King's College Hospital, London. (R)

11.30 Reggie Yates' Extreme Russia: Gay and Under Attack. (R)

12.25 Weather for the Week Ahead.

12.30 BBC News.

BBC2

6.35 A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **7.20** Glorious Gardens from Above. (R) **8.05** Natural World: Heligan – Secrets of the Lost Garden. (R) **9.05** Dino Dana. (R) **10.00** Saturday Kitchen: Pest Bites. (R) **11.30** Hairy Bikers' Best of British. (R) **12.15** Rick Stein's German Bite. (R) **1.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.15** Big Cats in High Places: Natural World. (R) **4.00** Operation Grand Canyon with Dan Snow. (R) **5.00** Fog It! (R) **5.50** Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing. (R)

6.20 Strokes of Genius: Federer v Nadal.

A look back at the 2008 Wimbledon men's singles final, which saw Rafael Nadal triumph over Roger Federer in an epic five-set encounter that lasted for four hours and 48 minutes. The contest was also halted twice for rain delays, meaning the event stretched for over seven hours before eventually reaching its conclusion not long before nightfall.

8.00 Countryfile. Ellie Harrison and Sean Fletcher explore the ground of Hampton Court Palace, home to the last remaining working shire horses in London, which provide a natural alternative to modern machinery. Plus, a look at the finished design for the Countryfile Wildlife Garden to appear at the Hampton Court Flower Show, and Anita Rani and Adam Henson meet two more candidates for the Young Presenter contest.

8.00 Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce presents the show from Cardiff Castle, where items brought in to be valued include a simple pottery jug given as a love token, an early Hockney print found in a junk shop, and a draft score for Elgar's Enigma Variations signed by the composer.

9.00 Poldark. Grain prices rise, leaving the poor struggling to support their families. Ross makes a desperate gamble to help them, which draws the attention of the prime minister. However, Falmouth persuades him to compromise his principles to achieve his goals. Demelza continues her plot to bring Drake and Rosina together, but he is far more interested in a future with Morwenna. Caroline continues to reveal her grief, and Arthur is driven into a murderous rage when he learns the truth about Rowella's affair.

10.00 Reporting Trump's First Year: The Fourth Estate. Violence erupts in Charlottesville and President Trump fails to denounce white supremacists, before further stirring division by blaming the media for the nation's problems.

10.55 Film: The Box. (2009) A couple receive a box that will make them rich at the press of a button – if they do so, someone will die. Sci-fi thriller, with Cameron Diaz and James Marsden.

12.45 Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **1.45** Hobby City. (R) **2.45** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruenesse Kids. (R) **6.20** Grizzly Tales for Gruenesse Kids. (R) **6.35** Dino Dana. (R) **6.50** Mission Employable. (R) **6.55** The Oddballs Show. (R) **7.05** NinjaGo: Tournament of Elements. (R) **7.30** Drop Dead Weird. **8.25** TV News. **8.30** Mountain Lions. (R) **9.00** Saturday Kitchen: Pest Bites. (R) **9.25** Film: Problem Child. (1990) **10.55** The Best of the Voice Worldwide. **11.55** Midsomer Murders. (R) **1.55** ITV News: Weather. **2.00** Catchphrase. (R) **2.45** Tenable. (R) **3.45** Tipping Point: Lucky Stars. (R) **4.45** Film: Despicable Me 2. (2013) Animated comedy sequel, with the voice of Steve Carell.

6.30 ITV News: Weather.

6.45 Regional Programme;

7.00 The Chase: Celebrity Special.

Bradley Walsh presents as one-time Coronation Street actor Jimi Mistry (Khalid Nazir), former Emmerdale star Gemma Atkinson (Carly Hope). Loose Women's Nadia Sawalha and veteran actor James Cosmo pit their wits against ruthless quiz genius the Chaser, in the hope of winning a potential prize pot worth thousands of pounds for the charity of their choice. They must work as a team and play strategically to answer general knowledge questions against the clock and race down the game board to the exit without being caught. (R)

8.00 Vera. The detective is drawn into Newcastle's underworld to discover the identity of a murder victim found dead in the river, with no clue as to who he is apart from a distinctive drug wrapper. She discovers the dead man had ties to some very dangerous people, many of whom may have wanted him dead, while a witness's testimony links the case to a remote farm where a murderer took place 13 years previously. The connection brings Kenny's past back to haunt him, as he was responsible for seeing the perpetrator convicted. (R)

10.00 ITV News: Weather.

10.20 Tommy Cooper Forever.

11.20 The Big Fish Off.

Former athletics stars Linford Christie and Katherine Merry join team captains Ali Hamidi and Dean Macey. (R)

12.10 JACKPOT! **247. 3.00** MotorSport UK. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

12.45 Sign Zone: Question Time.

1.45 Hobby City.

2.45 This Is BBC Two.

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Motor Sport: Volkswagen Racing Cup. **6.30 Motor Sport:** FIA World Rallycross Championship. **7.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.25** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Fraser. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Bake Off: The Professionals. (R) **10.00** Sunday Brunch. **1.00** Formula 1 British Grand Prix Live Build-Up. Previewing the 10th round of the season. **1.40** Formula 1 British Grand Prix Live. Coverage of the 10th round of the season (Start-time 2.00pm). **4.30** Formula 1 British Grand Prix Live Reaction. **5.35** Bang on Budget. **6.30** Channel 4 News.

7.00 The Great British Germ Hunt.

Kate Quilton and a team explore the invisible world of bacteria, as they conduct a series of unique experiments to find out why these germs are crucial for our health. The team head to a music festival to see if a weekend of partying improves the bacterial diversity of a group of volunteers, and two ordinary British homes are put under the microscope to reveal the germs we live with.

8.00 Bake Off:

The Professionals. Liam Charles and Tom Allen host the final of the patisserie competition, with the last three remaining teams of bakers pulling out all the stops to impress judges Benoit Blin and Cherish Finden and be crowned as the first champion of the professional series. The bakers face a marathon nine-hour challenge, during which they must create a lavish banquet display large enough to serve 80 people. Their creation has to combine four different types of dessert and a towering showpiece combining chocolate and sugar work. Last in the series.

9.00 The Handmaid's Tale.

A sick baby is born to offsprings offred and Serena Joy. Meanwhile, Janine finally faces Naomi. Dystopian drama based on Margaret Atwood's novel about a future American theocracy.

10.10 World's Tiniest Masterpieces.

Profile of sculptor Willard Wigan, whose minuscule work can only be glimpsed through a microscope, as he creates a sculpture small enough to fit inside a human cell. **11.05 Film: The Eagle.** (2011) Action adventure, starring Channing Tatum and Jamie Bell.

12.20 The Last Leg.

(R) **2.15** The Secret Life of the Zoo. (R) **3.15** Gillette World Sport. **3.40** My Kitchen Rules. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! Little Princess. **6.10** Wissper. (R) **6.20** Poppy Cat. (R) **6.30** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.35** The Secret Life of Puppies. (R) **6.40** Seaside Antics. (R) **6.45** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **6.55** Simon. (R) **7.00** Peppa Pig. (R) **7.05** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.20** Thomas & Friends. (R) **7.30** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.45** Rusty Rivets. (R) **8.00** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.15** Pirata & Capitano. **8.35** Noddy Toyland Detective. (R) **8.50** Floogals. (R) **9.05** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.20** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.35** Digby Dragon. (R) **9.55** Peppa Pig. (R) **10.05** Peppa Pig. (R) **10.10** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.45** Pets Make You Laugh Out Loud. **3.11.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.00** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.00** The Secret Life of Puppies: Terrible Twos. (R) **1.55** Film: Terrible Twos. (1987) Romantic drama, with Patrick Swayze and Jennifer Grey. **5.00** Film: Maid in Manhattan. (2002) Romantic comedy. **7.55** Film: Mamma Mia! Sing-along (2008) **7.50** Film: Mamma Mia! Sing-along (2008) **9.00** Love Island 10.00 Love Island: AfterSun 11.05 Family Guy 12.35 American Dad! 1.30 CelebBaby 2.15 Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records 2.25 Teleshopping 5.55 ITV2 Nightscreen.

7.00 Cricket on 5.

England v India. Action from the final T20 of the three-match series, which took place at The Brightside Ground in Bristol. Prior to the commencement of this series, England had an excellent record against India in this format of the game when playing on home soil, winning all three of the matches to have taken place.

8.00 Chuckle Time with the Chuckle Brothers.

The comedy duo introduce this new clip-show, featuring face plants and badly behaved fish.

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Film: We're the Millers. (2013) A drug dealer is hired to pick up a shipment of marijuana in Mexico and bring it back over the border. To make himself look less suspicious, he recruits a stripper and two teenagers to pose as a perfect all-American family on holiday, only to end up getting on the wrong side of a drug cartel. Comedy, with Jason Sudeikis, Jennifer Aniston and Emma Roberts.

11.10 Film: Hot Tub Time Machine 2.

(2015) A group of friends travel into the future to solve a mystery after one of them gets shot by a mysterious stranger. Comedy, starring Rob Corddry and Craig Robinson.

1.00 SuperCasino.

3.10 The A-Team. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 Vienna Summer Night Concert 2018 **8.15** Legends of the Deep: Giant Squid **9.00** Horizon 10.00 The Sky at Night **10.30** Hunting the Nazi Gold Train **11.30** The Art of Scandinavia 12.30 The Art That Made Mexico: **1.30** David Starkey's Music & Monarchy **2.30** Horizon 3.30 Close.

ITV2

11.50 You've Been Framed! Top 100 Talent **12.50** You've Been Framed! Gold **1.20** Take Me Out 2.35 Happy Feet Two (2011) **3.45** FYI Daily 3.50 Film: Happy Feet Two (2011) **4.15** Film: The Mummy (1999) **5.25** FYI Daily 5.30 Film: The Mummy (1999) **6.45** Film: Mamma Mia! Sing-along (2008) **7.50** FYI Daily 7.55 Film: Mamma Mia! Sing-along (2008) **9.00** Love Island 10.00 Love Island: AfterSun 11.05 Family Guy 12.35 American Dad! 1.30 CelebBaby 2.15 Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records 2.25 Teleshopping 5.55 ITV2 Nightscreen.

ITV3

7.00 Victoria 9.00 Unforgotten 11.05 Wive in the Blood 1.00 Blue Murder 2.20 Liverpool 1.15 Road to Avonlea 4.55 Murder, She Wrote 5.45 ITV3 Nightscreen.

ITV4

12.00 Tour de France Live. Coverage of stage two of the most prestigious race on the calendar. **5.00** Snooker v Darts 5.10 Storage Wars: Texas 6.00 Pawn Stars 7.00 Tour de France Highlights 8.00 Film: Rush Hour 2 (2001) **9.05** FYI Daily 9.10 Film: Rush Hour 2 (2001) **9.55** Film: The Glimmer Man (1996) **10.55** FYI Daily 11.00 Film: The Glimmer Man (1996) **11.50** Minder 2.05 The Glimmer Man Show 2.50 ITV4 Nightscreen 3.00 Teleshopping.

E4

11.00 The Goldbergs 1.00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine 1.30 Young Sheldon 2.00 The Big Bang Theory 3.50 The Crystal Maze: Celebrity Special 6.30 Film: Mrs Doubtfire (1993) **8.05** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD 4.00 Gogglebox 11.00 Gogglebox Australia 12.05 The Big Bang Theory 1.05 Marvel's Agents of SHIELD 2.05 Gogglebox Australia 2.55 Rude Tube 3.25 Hollyoaks.

Film4

11.00 Stuart Little (1999) **1.00** Stuart Little 2 (2002) **2.30** The Three Stooges (2012) **4.20** The Train (1964) **7.00** Taxi (2004) **9.00** Faster (2010) **10.55** The Purge (2013) **12.35** Piranha 3DD (2012) **2.10** Phase IV (1973) **3.55** Close.

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MONDAY**Killer Date, Channel 5, 3.15pm**

An attractive woman agrees to go on the date arranged online by her sister. The app she is supplied with uses GPS technology and when she starts to receive disturbing messages via the medium, every man in her life becomes a suspect. Thriller, starring Anna Hutchinson. (2016)

TUESDAY**Rocky V, ITV, 10.50pm**

The heavyweight champion is forced into retirement due to brain damage inflicted in the ring, and finds his fortune has been lost on the stock market by his accountant. Returning to his working-class roots, he trains an up-and-coming fighter, only to see his protege turn against him. Drama sequel, starring Sylvester Stallone, Talia Shire and real-life boxer Tommy Morrison. (1990)

WEDNESDAY**Sex, Lies And Deception, Channel 5, 3.15pm**

Premiere. Samantha and Paul's marriage is put under strain when a car accident involving their daughter Jane sees her admitted to hospital. Drama, starring Jessalyn Gilsig. (2018)



The Last Boy Scout, Friday, ITV, 10.45pm

THURSDAY**Clash of the Titans, Channel 5, 9pm**

The son of the Greek god Zeus is raised by humans and grows up to reject his immortal heritage in anger at the gods' cruel treatment of humans. He sets out on a quest to find a means to kill the evil lord of the underworld in revenge for his father's death, facing all manner of strange creatures. Mythological adventure, with Sam Worthington, Liam Neeson, Ralph Fiennes and Gemma Arterton. (2010)

FRIDAY**The Last Boy Scout, ITV, 10.45pm**

A private eye half-heartedly takes a job as bodyguard to a nightclub dancer. A shocking attack, however, forces him to take his duties more seriously, and before long he uncovers evidence of murder and corruption - all linked to the world of American football. Action thriller, starring Bruce Willis, Damon Wayans, Chelsea Field and Halle Berry. (1991)

New mystery series hopes to be a novel success

Can an eight-part TV version of Joan Lindsay's classic novel outshine the much-admired film version?

Those who have seen director Peter Weir's haunting movie would probably answer in the negative, but in recent years, the small screen has come to rival its bigger cousin for quality, so we may be onto a winner.

In recent times, the likes of Big Little Lies, The Handmaid's Tale, Top of the Lake and Sky's latest series, Sharp Objects, have gone some way to boost the number of leading roles for women, and Picnic at Hanging Rock certainly lends a hand too – it's dominated by strong females.

When the book was published back in 1967, it was hugely acclaimed and quickly became known as one of the greatest entries in Australian literature, but its origins have puzzled readers ever since.

Some are utterly convinced it's based on a true story, while Lindsay herself did little to persuade people

one way or the other. However, her housekeeper later claimed her employer had dreamt the basic idea.

A 2017 article from the Australian magazine The Age stated, "The dream had centred on a summer picnic at a place called Hanging Rock, which Joan knew well from her childhood holidays."

Joan told Rae (her housekeeper) that the dream had felt so real that when she awoke at 7.30am, she could still feel the hot summer breeze blowing through the gum trees and she could still hear the peals of laughter and conversation of the people she'd imagined, and their gaiety and lightness of spirit.

All this mystery merely adds to the tale's appeal.

The film starred Rachel Roberts, while Vivian Gray – instantly recognisable to Neighbours fans for her subsequent role as battleaxe Mrs Mangel – had a small role, as did Oscar-nominated actress Jacki Weaver.

It's situated in an isolated mansion in the bush, close to the local beauty spot of Hanging Rock.

star Natalie Dormer who takes the lead role of widowed headmistress Hester Appleyard, who arrives in Australia as the tale begins.

"I'm excited that the BBC Two is bringing this magical reimagining of an Australian classic to the UK audience," says Dormer. "It's a collaboration of which I'm very proud to be a part."

Sue Deeks, the BBC's head of programme acquisition, adds: "This stylistically bold and atmospheric take on Picnic At Hanging Rock – led by one of Britain's most exciting actors, Natalie Dormer – will be irresistible both fans of the classic novel and to those coming to this mysterious story for the first time."

Ms Appleyard's reasons for moving to the other side of the world are shrouded in mystery, but in just six years, she manages to turn her self-named college into a leading educational establishment attended by bright girls from well-to-do families.

It's situated in an isolated mansion in the bush, close to the local beauty spot of Hanging Rock.



Picnic at Hanging Rock, Wednesday, BBC2, 9.05pm

BEST OF THE REST

from the US leader's visit, and hears from a varied group of public figures, including Lord Sugar, Nigel Farage, Germaine Greer and Alex Salmond, to find out what they think about the trip. Martin Geissler will also ask what the visit says about the state of the so-called special relationship and what it will mean for Britain's future dealings with the controversial President.

FRIDAY**First Night of the Proms****BBC2, 8.30pm**

New series. At London's Royal Albert Hall, the new season launches with a feast for the eyes and ears in the world premiere of Five Telegrams, with music by Anna Meredith and stunning digital projections by 59 Productions marking the centenary of the end of the First World War. The all-British programme also features Vaughan Williams' pre-war choral masterpiece Toward the Unknown Region, along with Holst's evergreen Proms favourite The Planets - the first piece Mars, Bringer of War, famously anticipates the onset of mechanistic warfare. The BBC Symphony Orchestra, under conductor Sakari Oramo, is joined by the combined forces of the BBC Symphony Chorus, the National Youth Choir of Great Britain and the BBC Proms Youth Ensemble. Presented by Katie Derham.

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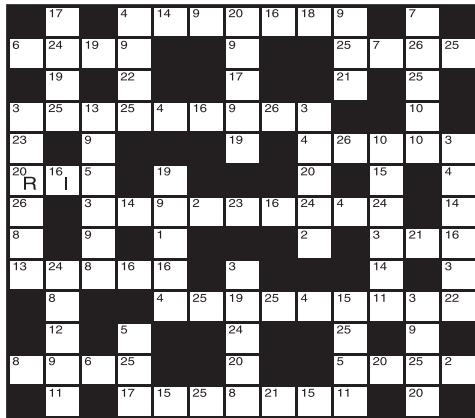
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Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	Y	2	R	3	P	4	K	5	S	6	N	7	O	8	I	9	V	10	D	11	T	12	C	
14	J	15	B	16	H	17	M	18	F	19	G	20	Z	21	X	22	Q	23	W	24	U	25	L	26

Quiz

- What is the highest mountain on the continent of Europe?
- With which genre is author Michael Moorcock associated?
- Which order of chivalry did Princess Anne receive in 1994?
- Which alcoholic drink is used in making lobster Newburg?
- Which element has the Latin name plumbum?
- Who became a Dame and received a Tony award within 48 hours in 1994?
- What was the first name of baby care writer Dr Spock?
- Which French tennis player banned her father from attending Wimbledon?
- In which ocean are the Maldives?
- Which organisation's agents were nicknamed G-Men?

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

- Feeling of optimism engendered by fine liquor? (4,7)
- See 9 Across
- Has pull when the scores are level (5)
- Article in position in royal residence (6)
- Reunite the train (7)
- Cutting of furrow by worker (9)
- Maintain contact without letting the ball come into play (4,2,5)
- Attending the whole programme in any case (2,3,6)
- Judicially kill about four in managerial capacity (9)
- Pull slippery customer up on sheltered side (7)
- Lets on it's not honestly gained (6)
- Stratum suitable for egg producer (5)
- Break the law with this instrument (3)

Down

- & 2Dn. Dine away from home and consume all the food? (3,3)
- Tall men to make a distribution (9)
- Put the squeeze on newspapers (5)
- Having no faith in merit of icy clan (7)
- Irritate by doing some embroidery? (6)
- A tense situation in a parliament (6)
- No let-up for rich in revolution (7)
- Turner of metal at heavy engineering plant (5)
- Eastern country where 100 produce eggs for making pottery (5,4)
- Let the cat out in 22, for example (3)
- Ignore Delta for top part (7,4)
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Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Japan; 2 Bobby Charlton; 3 Insects;

4 Santa Fe; 5 Hockey; 6 Harvard University;

7 Italy; 8 A pixel; 9 Prunus; 10 Hundred Years'

War.

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Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

- Feeling of optimism engendered by fine liquor? (4,7)
- See 9 Across
- Has pull when the scores are level (5)
- Article in position in royal residence (6)
- Reunite the train (7)
- Cutting of furrow by worker (9)
- Maintain contact without letting the ball come into play (4,2,5)
- Attending the whole programme in any case (2,3,6)
- Judicially kill about four in managerial capacity (9)
- Pull slippery customer up on sheltered side (7)
- Lets on it's not honestly gained (6)
- Stratum suitable for egg producer (5)
- Break the law with this instrument (3)

Down

- 9 & 2Dn. Dine away from home and consume all the food? (3,3)
- Tall men to make a distribution (9)
- Put the squeeze on newspapers (5)
- Having no faith in merit of icy clan (7)
- Irritate by doing some embroidery? (6)
- A tense situation in a parliament (6)
- No let-up for rich in revolution (7)
- Turner of metal at heavy engineering plant (5)
- Eastern country where 100 produce eggs for making pottery (5,4)
- Let the

Halesowen Office Lettings & Property Management



Belbroughton Road, HALESOWEN £950 pcm+ Fees
A newly decorated & superbly proportioned semi-detached family home on the very popular development The Huntings, being convenient for all local amenities.

Trejion Road, CRADLEY HEATH £750 pcm+ Fees
A fantastic opportunity to rent a 3 bedroom detached property in a sought after location for Timbertree Primary School, Old Hill Train Station, Huden Hill Leisure Centre and shops. This lovely house features a large through lounge, large modern kitchen, 2 double and 1 single bedroom, large house bathroom with a separate shower cubicle. The property benefits from a garage, gas central heating, double glazing, solar panels, and a lovely private rear garden. EPC: B

Clement Road, HALESOWEN/BLACKHEATH £680 pcm+ Fees
Completely renovated larger than average three-bedroom mid terrace property in a most convenient location close to Blackheath Town Centre and all amenities. Featuring 2 reception rooms, large fitted kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, 3 bedrooms private rear garden, on road parking. EPC: D



Wroxley House, HALESOWEN £625 pcm+ Fees
Luxury living in Hayley Green is this superb luxury 1st floor apartment offering spacious accommodation including open plan lounge/kitchen with appliances, dining area, 2 double bedrooms, master with en-suite, a further well appointed bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing and allocated parking. EPC: B

Attwood Street, HALESOWEN £625 pcm+ Fees
A modern 2 bedroom semi-detached house close to central Halesowen and benefiting from a modern fitted kitchen, well presented living room, 2 good size bedrooms and family bathroom with shower, large rear garden, driveway for 2 cars. Minimum 12 Month Contract. EPC: TBC

Cakemore Road, ROWLEY REGIS £595 pcm+ Fees
A well presented 2 bedroom family home in this very popular location close to Rowley Regis train station & easy access to the M5. The accommodation comprises of 2 reception rooms both with fireplaces, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, downstairs bathroom with shower, 2 double bedrooms. The property further benefits from central heating, double glazing, courtyard garden & off road parking to rear. EPC: D



Aqua Court, ROWLEY REGIS £595 pcm+ Fees
•• 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE •• Beautifully presented and not to be missed. A ground floor apartment, a stones throw away from Blackheath Town Centre and featuring 2 double bedrooms, master bedroom with en-suite, open plan lounge/kitchen, house bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing, allocated parking space, viewing highly recommended. EPC: B

Coppice Road, CRADLEY HEATH £585 pcm+ Fees
Recently refurbished to a good standard. Ideally located on the Timbertree Estate for the local primary school. This 2 double bedroom house features 1 reception room, modern kitchen/diner, house bathroom with shower, covered storage area to the rear, rear garden, on road parking. EPC: C

Bloomfield Street West, HALESOWEN £575 pcm+ Fees
A traditional style terraced property in this most convenient location close to Halesowen Town Centre, local shopping, schools and public transport facilities. This property offers a lounge, dining kitchen, cellar, 2 bedrooms and bathroom to the 1st floor. Also benefiting from gas central heating, double glazing and a private rear garden. EPC: D



Grange Crescent, HALESOWEN £575 pcm+ Fees
•• 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE •• We are pleased to offer this extremely well presented 2 bedroom 1st floor flat conveniently located close to Halesowen Town Centre. The property briefly comprises of lounge, fitted kitchen with appliances, 2 double bedrooms with fitted wardrobes, bathroom suite with shower, gas central heating, large driveway, rear private garden & garage. EPC: D

Hagley Road (Rosegardens), HALESOWEN £550 pcm+ Fees
An unfurnished 1st floor coach house apartment, within walking distance to Halesowen Town Centre and on a major bus route. Features include a lounge, hallway, kitchen, fitted kitchen with fridge freezer, 2 bedrooms, bathroom with shower and parking space. An internal inspection is highly recommended. EPC: D

Hammersley Close, HALESOWEN £550 pcm+ Fees
•• UNDERGOING A RE-DECORATION •• Located in the very quiet cul-de-sac, close to local buses to Halesowen, Cradley Heath and Old Hill. This is an unfurnished 1st floor mid terrace house, comprising of: gas central heating, fitted kitchen, living room, 2 bedrooms, bathroom with shower off the taps, rear garden, driveway parking. EPC: C



Whitehall Court, HALESOWEN £525 pcm+ Fees
Centrally located to Halesowen Town Centre is this well presented 1st floor flat with private entrance, hallway, kitchen with appliances, living room, bathroom with newly fitted shower, 2 good size bedrooms, communal garden & secure gated parking to rear of property. EPC: C

Luanne Close, CRADLEY HEATH £525 pcm+ Fees
Wonderful corner plot and with its own balcony, 1st floor modern apartment, ideally located for Old Hill train station and local shops benefits from 1 double bedroom and 1 single bedroom, modern kitchen with washer/dryer, lovely lounge with access to your own private balcony, house bathroom with shower, allocated parking. EPC: B

Wordsley Court, WORDSLEY £525 pcm+ Fees
•• 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE •• A modern, fully furnished large apartment within walking distance of Wordsley Green & King George V park. Featuring lovely lounge, 2 generous size double bedrooms, fitted kitchen (no appliances), shower room, secure parking to rear of property. EPC: C



Southgate Way, DUDLEY £499 pcm+ Fees
•• 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE •• A stunning and spacious well presented unfurnished 1st floor apartment featuring 2 bedrooms, electric storage heating, double glazing, open plan living room with fitted kitchen (includes a sofa, wardrobes and appliances), house bathroom with shower, allocated parking space. Viewing highly recommended. EPC: C

Hingley Court, CRADLEY HEATH/OLD HILL £495 pcm+ Fees
In the centre of Old Hill. This lovely 1st floor apartment features an open plan lounge/kitchen with a washer/dryer and fridge freezer, 2 large double bedrooms, modern bathroom with shower, 1 allocated parking space behind electric gates. Not to be missed. EPC: TBC

John Street, WORDSLEY £465 pcm+ Fees
Close to local buses to Kingswinford, Stourbridge and a short walk from Amblecote. This 2 double bedroom terraced house features 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, house bathroom with shower, on road parking and an enclosed rear garden. EPC: E



Warwick Close, OLDBURY £450 pcm+ Fees
A 1 bedroom ground floor flat being double glazed and all electric heating. The accommodation features lounge, fully fitted kitchen, 1 double bedroom, bathroom with shower, front garden. EPC: C

Upper High Street, CRADLEY HEATH £395 pcm+ Fees
•• 1ST MONTHS RENT HALF PRICE •• Modern ground floor flat close to Cradley Heath train station & all bus routes. Featuring an open plan lounge/fitted kitchen with appliances, hallway to 1 double bedroom, bathroom suite with shower, electric central heating, communal garden to rear of property, on road parking. Only 1 months security deposit •• 1 months rent in advance. EPC: C

Somers Road, HALESOWEN £375 pcm+ Fees
A 1 bedroom 1st floor apartment close to Halesowen Town Centre, offering generous accommodation which includes new carpets, feature lounge with open plan kitchen, bedroom with en-suite shower room, double glazing, communal garden, on road parking, unfurnished. EPC: E



Well-presented detached dormer-style bungalow in a pleasant semi-rural position close to town

Occupying a particularly pleasant semi-rural position in a highly desirable area known as The Straits', 69 Cotwall End Road, Lower Gornal, is close to a range of amenities and within a short distance of Sedgley town centre and Gornal village.

LOWER GORNAL £219,950

double glazing, three bedrooms, a bathroom and Jack & Jill en-suite.

An extremely well-presented detached dormer-style bungalow, it is for sale through Taylors Estate Agents at £219,950.

It has gas central heating and

In more detail the lounge/diner has a feature flame effect gas fire,

French doors and a window to the rear, real wood flooring and a door to the kitchen.

The kitchen has a range of wall, base and drawer units, roll edge work tops, breakfast bar, integrated oven hob and extractor, sink drainer with mixer taps over, tiled splash backs, plumbing for a washing machine, integrated dishwasher and fridge freezer and a window to the side.

Contact Taylors on 01902 880888.



Extended semi-detached home in elevated position has spacious accommodation and four bedrooms

A fabulous extended, semi-detached house in an elevated position, Willow Bank in Edge View Walk, Kinver, is located just off White Hill.

KINVER £314,950

Having views of Kinver Edge, making it the perfect family home, it is for sale through Davies, White & Perry at £314,950. Deceptively spacious with flexible accommodation, it has undergone re-modernisation throughout.

It has three reception rooms

dishwasher. There is a large utility room with plumbing and space for washing machine, a tumble dryer and freezer, and downstairs WC.

Upstairs, there are four generous-sized bedrooms, three doubles and one good single. The master bedroom has a full en-suite bathroom. The family bathroom has a bath with a shower over, built-in vanity wash hand basin and back to wall WC.

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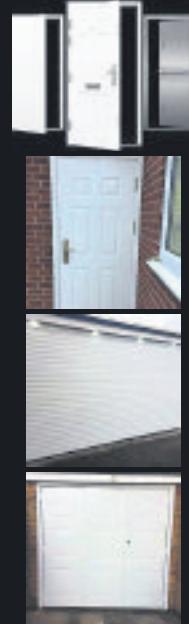
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1

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2

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WANTED Large Inflatable Boat, can collect. 01785 248358/07931 674876.

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CAMPER VAN
1989.

Good condition.

Many extras.

ill health forces sale.

£6,500 or very near offer.
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A BEAUTIFUL PARK NR LUDLOW
35x12 caravan from £10,000. Gym
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Rialto 2 berth 2000 great condition well looked after. Porch awning and many extras. £2,650 ono. 07775 50242.

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ISABELLA CAPRI LUX
CARAVAN AWNING 1055

green, very good condition, carbon X poles, plastic and hard standing pegs, guide ropes, peg puller, skirt and wheel arch cover, all curtains included.

£450.

PROTEC FRONT COVER

For Bailey caravan.

£75.00.

01746 761161. 07872 622860.

Holiday Home for sale - 2017
Willerby Wrekton

BRAND NEW Limited edition, enhanced features £22,995 on a stunning 5 star park in the Welsh Marches set above the River Severn with private fishing & stunning Bowling Pavilion Nr Shrewsbury. Will appeal to retired people & couples.

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STATIC CARAVAN

With large decking, on quiet site in Mid Wales.

Two fishing pools. Dog Friendly.

No age limit.

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High specification by retired engineer, rock and roll, swivel seats, 922, gas safe etc, new batteries, £600 service, OE alloys, tyres, MOT 2018, never used due to ill health.

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Next Sale: July 22nd
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10.30am - 4pm
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Mobile deep tissue aromatherapy massage treatment by qualified therapist
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AUCTION STARTS 6PM -
VIEWING 4.30PM
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Markets

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3 Home & Services

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LOUIS TUB CHAIR large, pink damask and dark wood, good condition. £150. 01384 827607.

£1,250,000 STOCK LIQUIDATION
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Any gauge or age

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READERS ARE ADVISED to fully consider all of their options before agreeing to the sale of any of their items.

SPECTRUM GAMES Wanted, plus any Spectrum 48k or 128k+2 computers wanted also any old Crash or Sinclair Magazines. 01902 892918.

FOR ALL RAILWAY COLLECTIONS

Any gauge or age

Hornby/Bachmann/Brownhams/Roundhouse/Graham/Farsh/any live steam. Also Die Cast, Corgi, Dinky, Spot On.

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8

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2008, 65,500 miles

Metallic blue with white / grey interior, excellent condition.

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FSH, manual gearbox, 1.6 petrol.

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HONDA CIVIC TDI
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72,000 miles.
Panoramic sunroof.
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MERCEDES CLS 320 CDI
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Silver with black leather.
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Two owners from new.
135k. FSH.
Excellent condition.
£4,995.
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MUST BE SEEN

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FSH. Mot Jan 2019.
Very clean.
69,000 miles.
Silver and black.
Very clean body work.
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2.7, 2000, FSH, Mot till January, 89,000 miles, new clutch and bearing, new battery.
First to see will buy.
£4,400 ovno.

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This car is immaculate throughout.
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Any Trial.
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Full leather.
2007.
Immaculate.
Only 26,000 miles.
Second lady driver.
£2,500.
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FORD FOCUS ZETEC 1.6 ESTATE
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Silver.
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Offers around £200.
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Low mileage.
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KIA RIO
2005. 1.3LE+.
long mot, good runner,
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Good reliable family car.
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Alloy wheels. Tow Bar.
Leather interior.
Heated front seats.
Air con. Six CD Multi changer.
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BARGAIN

PEUGEOT 307
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PEUGEOT ESTATE 307 SW
Petrol, 1600cc, 2004, metallic blue, panoramic sunroof, EW, manual.
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MUST BE SEEN

ROVER 25 1.4
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£600.
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WV LUPO 1 LITRE E
3 door hatchback.
2000.
Yellow.
Petrol. Manual.
MoT March 2019.
93,000 miles.
Two keys.
Ideal first car.
£750 ono.
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BARGAIN

VAUXHALL ZAFIRA
2001.
Grey.
MoT December 18.
Very reliable.
£500 ono.
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SKODA FABIA 1.4
ESTATE
03 reg, long MoT,
£400.
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£375.

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Buyer could call.
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9

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Public Notices

PUBLIC & LEGAL NOTICES

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(remember to include a name/ contact number for confirmation of receipt)

10 Personals

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10+ SWAP NUMBERS with local HOTTEST seeking Adult Fun!

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XC40 delightfully reassuring to drive

By Carnel Stewart

As a company, Volvo is looking very confident. After a few years hovering on the edge of an iceberg, the Swedish company reached relatively firm ground when Zhejiang Geely Holdings took over in 2010 and pumped in much needed capital while allowing the experts and engineers to do what they do best – produce solid, reliable, well-built cars packed with understated, immensely important innovations.

It was after all Volvo who brought us the three-point seat belt, rearward facing child safety seats, side impact protection, whiplash protection, collapsible steering column and blind spot indicators to name but a few. And Geely has had its faith rewarded with Volvo showing operating profits of £1.2 billion and record global sales with more to come, not least because from 2019 Volvo will only produce cars with an electrified variant – hybrid, mild hybrid, plug-in.

The XC40 is the latest in a distinguished line of XC models which were first introduced in 1997 when the executive V70 had a crossover added to the line-up – the XC or Cross Country, to give it its Sunday name.

This neat, new model is as delightfully reassuring to drive as every XC model that has gone before and probably those which will come after.

And while the winter weather may have caused many of us a few upsets, it has done reliable off-roaders no harm at all. XC40 orders are at this point more than double predictions and that European Car of the Year 2018 will have added another sales boost should one be needed.

Immensely practical, it has a flat access boot



The XC40 has a flat access boot space

space, which can be cleverly sectioned off into more functional compartments, adding up to 460 litres with the rear seats up and 1,336 litres with them dropped down. Interior storage spaces including a removable waste bin between the front seats. Door pockets are large enough for a lap top and there is a folding hook on the glove box for takeaway bags.

Inside is comfortable, spacious and well put together. There is 12-inch touch screen display allowing access to that all-important connectivity which is Apple CarPlay and Android Auto compatible. Also readily accessible is the excellent navigation system.

On the road, the XC40 is relaxed, composed and supremely confident and, while not billed as an off-roader, it does have an all-wheel drive option and is quite capable of traversing the occasional field.

From launch there are two engines – Volvo's four-cylinder 2.0 litre T5 petrol or the



The XC40 is the latest in a distinguished line of XC models which were first introduced in 1997

four-cylinder 2.0 litre D4 diesel initially in First Edition trim – with more engines and trims to follow.

In terms of power, there is little to choose between them. Both are married to a smooth, efficient eight-speed automatic transmission and both purr along like contented cats. Expect around 55.4mpg from the diesel and a tad above 39mpg from the petrol.

As with other Volvos, the XC40 has three trims – Momentum, R Design and Inscription

– but in the UK we like our cars specced up, so Volvo has introduced a Pro variant which combines popular options and packs and a separate trim level. First Edition models are based on the R Design Pro – the more dynamic option which includes a sports chassis with stiffer dampers, fancy inlays in the dash and leather upholstery.

Distinguishing features between the three will have some reaching for their I Spy book of Volvos. Momentum buyers have the option

of a white roof, R Design has a black stone roof as standard and Inscription models have a single body colour. Front grilles are also different on each of the three. Check out too the sill plates – one is matt and the other high gloss – and the different shaped tail pipes.

As you might expect, the XC40 is big on safety aids with an optional cross traffic safety alert – very useful when reversing out of a parking space – available for the first time. Prices start at £27,905.

Smartphones could replace car keys



New agreement could see a big change

A group of car manufacturers and technology giants have formed a consortium which aims to create a standard system allowing cars to be operated via a smartphone rather than a key.

Manufacturers including Volkswagen, General Motors, Honda, Toyota and BMW have joined forces with the likes of Apple, Samsung, Bosch, Panasonic and LG to form the Car Connectivity Consortium (CCC). The group has now announced the new 'Digital Key Release 1.0' specification – a standard which sets out a system for locking, unlocking and starting a car with a compatible smart device.

The mixture of cars and smartphones is limited at the moment. Many companies, such as Volvo, provide companion smartphone apps which can be used to track and monitor cars, but so far only Tesla allows owners to ditch the key altogether and access their Model S, 3 or X with their mobile.

The CCC's new protocol aims to standardise smartphone operation with cars, assuring 'the highest state-of-the-art security level for vehicle access.'

The protocol is based around Near-Field Communication (NFC) the same technology that powers payment apps such as Apple Pay and Android Wallet. It's more secure than the radio frequency chips in current keyless entry systems or contactless payment cards, as it operates over a shorter range and cannot easily be 'boosted' by rogue car thieves.

The Consortium is now hard at work on version 2.0, which is targeted for release in the first quarter of 2019. It will expand version 1 to a wider array of smart devices and vehicles.



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Disco Sport – once driven you won't want to get behind the wheel of anything else

By Carmel Stewart

The passing of the compact LandRover Freelander was noted with regret by many, including me. First launched in 1997, over time it developed into a robust, well-made, comfortable, fun-to-drive vehicle until it was finally phased out in 2015.

It was replaced by the altogether more refined but no less robust, Discovery Sport. Built alongside the stylish Evoque, it has rapidly become one of LandRover's best-selling vehicles, despite the £30,000 – £50,000 price tag.

Fairly chunky in appearance than the Freelander, it is sleekly styled, with a high waist, rear roof spoiler, 12 colour options and daytime running lights to signal its arrival. And it offers five or seven seats.

Inside, this family-friendly British-built SUV breathes quality throughout with ergonomically designed, immensely comfortable seats, a tidy, uncluttered dash and (on the higher spec models) just enough hi-tech graphics and the like to keep you informed but not enough to cause information overload.

An easy flick through the on-screen info, for example, will offer an eco-graphic where by the driver can check the 'greeness' of their driving. The more competitive will want to beat their previous record.

The system, which gives everyone 100 per cent at the outset, resets itself after each journey. (86 per cent is the number to beat.)

Trims are many and varied: Pure, SE, SE Tech, HSE, HSE Luxury, HSE Dynamic Luxury and the Landmark special edition, celebrating 70 years of LandRover.

Even the five seat, Pure, front-wheel-drive, entry-level trim, which starts at £30,145, the spec is not ungenerous. Partial leather interior, ten speaker audio system, Bluetooth, autonomous emergency braking, trailer assist, leather steering wheel, lane departure warning, cruise control and rear parking aid are just a small sample of what is included.

However, this entry point only offers the Ingenium 2.0 litre, four cylinder, 150bhp turbocharged diesel engine with the six-speed manual transmission. Average economy for this unit runs at a tad under 50mpg and

emissions at 149 g/km while a standing start to 60mph takes less than ten seconds and top speed redlines at 112mph.

A step up to SE is needed for a more comprehensive engine line-up and the delicious nine-speed automatic transmission.

The top priced HSE Dynamic Luxury AWD starts at £50,665. Exclusively powered by the mighty Ingenium 2.0 litre four-cylinder, 290bhp, turbocharged petrol engine, linked to that super smooth nine-speed automatic transmission, it'll stretch out to 60mph from a standing start in 6.5 seconds and has a top speed of 135mph. Being a petrol engine, and a big one at that, it's a little heavy on the wallet as regards fuel – 31mpg average – and 204g/km of emissions.

Luxury

In the middle of this plethora of sophisticated engines and deliciously extensive spec lists, sits the HSE Luxury which has a starting price of £45,565 for the 2.0 litre 240bhp petrol engine; £45,810 for the 180bhp 2.0 litre diesel; and £49,985 for the 240bhp diesel.

While those clocking up the miles will head for the more economical oil burners, it is the petrol which will give a more dynamic driving experience, being lighter and more flexible.

On the road, it proved to be thoroughly capable and composed with excellent grip, precise steering and unrelenting power, seamlessly delivered on demand.

The driver's seat is a very comfortable place to be. The high driving position affords good all-round visibility and the higher spec models can be adjusted electronically for the perfect position and include lumbar support.

Middle row passengers can slide and recline, should they wish to do so. The two in the (optional) pull-up seats of the third row need a certain degree of agility and flexibility – not a place for Gran and Grumps – but fine for a school run or short hop to the pub.

Invest a slightly eye-watering £4,590 for access to the truly swish entertainment package with television screens integrated into the rear headrests and headphones so at



It is sleekly styled, with a high waist, rear roof spoiler, 12 colour options and daytime running lights

least two of the offspring can watch the TV programme/DVD of their choice on very clear screens.

The flat loading boot with its power-controlled lid, adds to the practicality of the Discovery Sport and, for those who have to add towning horse boxes and the like to their general family taxi duties, the electrically deployable tow bar at £1,005 would be a good investment. A rear-view camera is a no cost option.

Standard spec on the HSE Luxury includes Windsor

leather interior, selectable ambient lighting, heated/cooled front seats, heated leather steering wheel, parallel/perpendicular park assist, illuminated tread plates, USB charging points for rear seat passengers.

There is no doubt that there are cheaper SUVs on the market but there is something about the LandRover quality and style which draws you in and defies logic.

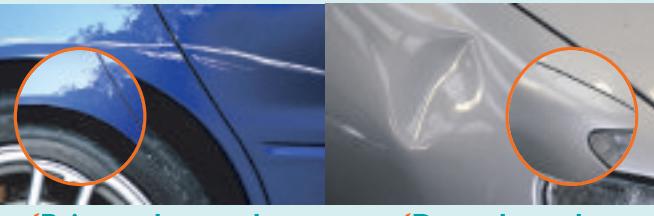
Once you have driven the Disco Sport, it will be a struggle to enjoy anything else.

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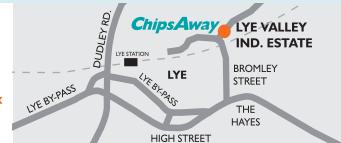
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When the going gets hot take this advice to keep cool in the car

Forecasters are predicting continued high temperatures in coming days, and GEM Motoring Assist is taking the opportunity to offer advice that should help keep drivers cool and calm, even when it's sweltering outside.

GEM road safety officer Neil Worth says: "Making long journeys in hot weather can be stressful, especially if traffic is heavy and you're stuck for any length of time."

"We recommend good preparation and sensible journey planning to help you cope with the worst of the heat."

"Hot weather can be tough for your car. For example, batteries frequently take a battering, with everyone on board wanting to keep phones and tablets fully charged, and holiday journeys in stop-start traffic."

"That's why we encourage you to carry out some basic checks before a long summer journey, and to ensure you keep your eye on the car for any signs and symptoms of trouble."

GEM has issued the following simple tips to assist drivers and their passengers when the weather is hot:

- Drink plenty of water. Take a good supply of drinking water with you, preferably in a cool bag. Staying hydrated helps keep you in good physical condition during times of high temperature.



Keep your cool and stay calm even when it's sweltering outside

- Check your engine before you set off; in particular make sure your oil and coolant levels are correct.

- Do not leave children or pets in the car, even for short periods. In hot weather, it's simply cruel and negligent. Besides, distress, dehydration and heatstroke can occur very quickly.

- If you get stuck in traffic, keep an eye on the temperature gauge for signs of overheating. If necessary, find somewhere safe to pull over and let the car cool down for half an hour.

- If you're likely to be stationary for a long time, switch off the engine to prevent overheating.



Joshua at Bar Sport, Cannock with world class boxing referee Terry O'Connor from Codsall



At Wolverhampton Racecourse Joshua with, left, James Ward (Gold Star) and, right, Andy Sahota (Showfighter)



Champion Anthony Joshua with his array of belts



Anthony Joshua defeated Wladimir Klitschko at Wembley last year

Star-studded match for Air Ambulance

CELEBRITIES from the world of music, television and Hollywood will converge on Walsall FC next year for a charity match in aid of the Midlands Air Ambulance Charity.

The star-studded match, on May 11, is being organised by Sellebrity Soccer and Midlands Air Ambulance Charity. Celebrities taking part include Calum Best, actor Stephen Graham and former Blue member Lee Ryan. Ex-footballers Darren Byfield and Paul Konchesky are also hoping to line-up. More players and special guest managers will be announced later.

Early bird supporters can buy tickets until December for £10 for adults and £5 for under 14s. Tickets are on sale at www.eticketing.co.uk/walsallfc/details/event.aspx?eventref=1798

A limited number of VIP Tickets are available at £35 per person, with access to the Players' Lounge before and after the match. A celebrity player pre-match dinner on May 10 costs £50 per person. Limited sponsorship packages are also available on 0800 8402040.

How Joshua is rewriting the boxing record books

SPORTING FEATURE

By Joseph Masi

"I've not reached my peak. I have made a few mistakes and I know what I want to achieve"

WHEN it comes to sporting superstars, they don't come any bigger than Anthony Joshua.

Humble, hungry and infectiously happy, the WBA, WBO and IBF heavyweight champion of the world is doing something British boxing has never seen before.

In just 21 fights he has reached the top of his sport – with American Deontay Wilder, the holder of the WBC belt, the only man standing in his way from making history and unifying the entire division.

And his next fight, says promoter Eddie Hearn, will be against Russian Alexander Povetkin.

It's the way Joshua has gone about his business though that has seen him grow a fanbase like no other. While sports fans idolise him, Joshua's politeness and joy for life has seen him capture the hearts of the nation. And he recently treated fans in Wolverhampton and Cannock to meet and greet sessions.

The reality is everyone and their nan loves the Hertfordshire-born heavyweight, who seemingly hasn't changed despite a rag-to-riches tale.

Wealthy beyond his wildest dreams, it is only in the past 12 months the 28-year-old has moved out of the former council flat he shared with his mother in Golders Green.

Determined

His new house is nearby and a 15-minute drive from a £500,000 Finchley apartment he bought for his ex-girlfriend and their infant son, Joseph.

But while he is now a superstar with the world at his feet, Joshua isn't getting carried away. And he is absolutely determined to enjoy his life and time in the spotlight. He said recently when meeting fans in the city: "I'm in Wolverhampton, I've never been here before and I want to come back next week because it hasn't changed despite a rag-to-riches tale."

Wealthy beyond his wildest dreams, it is only in the past 12 months the 28-year-old has moved out of the former council flat he shared with his mother in Golders Green.

It's a two-hour drive from my home and I've never been here, can you believe it? I need to start exploring. We're three hours from Morocco by plane. Two hours from France on the Eurostar.

"I hear athletes that say they can't do things because of their insurance policy. I'm not going to protect myself from reality. I'm not having that, let's go out and have a good time. Let's do it, let's have fun."

When speaking to Joshua, two things are clear. The first is that he is incredibly grateful for the life he now has. He may have worked incredibly hard to get there, but you'll never hear him moan.

"I'm not complaining about anything," he continued. "You just have to learn how to deal with the hard work. I'm smiling. Hard work has been my breakthrough. I'm not the most talented so I've got to enjoy the hard work."

The second thing that strikes you about him is how obsessed – repeat, obsessed – he is by becoming the best he can be. He knows he is on the brink of being regarded as one of the all-time greats – and that is something he isn't going to let pass him by.

"I'm very comfortable with where I am now," he continued. "I've not reached my peak. I have made a few mistakes and I know what I want to achieve.

"This is not about the money. What will make me content is knowing I gave my best.

"There is no financial package out there that can make you feel content with your life. I want to give it my all, that is what matters to me.

"One day – and that day will come – I don't want to sit watching the next generation of boxers thinking I didn't achieve my potential.

"I want to give it my best – inside and outside the ring. Now I see myself as a student of boxing. I'm always watching old fights. I love Evander Holyfield. He is the first fighter I have watched that I can really learn from. He has got rhythm. And I respect him so much because he didn't dodge anyone."

"Mike Tyson didn't box Riddick Bowe. Riddick Bowe didn't fight Lennox Lewis. But Holyfield fought

Tyson, Lewis and Riddick. He boxed them all. What a man – the ultimate warrior."

Joshua's rise to the top has been unprecedented. After winning gold at the London Olympics in 2012, he seriously contemplated defending his title in Brazil four years later. Instead, he made what, for him, was a difficult decision to go pro.

Yet he has since stormed through the heavyweight division with his eye-catching win over Wladimir Klitschko one of the greatest bouts of all time.

Away from the ring though, things haven't always been plain sailing. In 2009, Joshua was put on remand in Reading Prison for what he describes as 'fighting and other crazy stuff'. Then in March 2011, he was pulled over for speeding, with police finding cannabis hidden in a sports bag. And Joshua admits there was a time when he was in danger of losing his way.

"At school, I couldn't sit down for six hours a day – I was an active kid," he said. "It's hard to go from lesson to lesson. Some kids excel at that, but most kids want to be out."

Respectful

"I think my teachers would say I was a nice kid because I was always respectful, but I was a little bit disruptive at times."

"I was still getting into a bit of trouble up until about 2011. I was in London. I lived on an estate and I wanted to party and go out drinking."

"But I was a member of an amateur boxing club and I got a call to go up to Sheffield to be involved with the Olympic team."

"I hadn't come from a sporting background. I didn't have a clue what Olympic boxing was. But I went there to see what it was about and they kept me on the development squad."

"I wanted to kind of keep my hustle going on. I focused on balancing the two. But I remember, one day, speaking to my friend and saying 'I think I might be OK at this boxing thing.'

"I was about 20 years old. But I never went into boxing to be a boxer it was more about confidence."

Joshua admits both his parents are proud of how he has since dedicated his life to his sport.

"I wasn't ever looking for trouble, I was always respectful because that is how my parents raised me," the fighter said.

Old clubs in friendly clash for Regis Trophy

WEST BROM will host Coventry City at The Hawthorns in a pre-season friendly to celebrate the life of Cyrille Regis.

The Baggies will face the Sky Blues, with whom Regis won the FA Cup in 1987, on Saturday, July 28, in their final warm-up game before the Championship season starts. The two clubs will be competing for the inaugural Cyrille Regis Memorial Trophy in honour of the iconic striker who died aged 59 in January. Ticket details will be announced at a later date.

It is hoped other Midlands clubs will contest the trophy in years to come. Legendary forward Regis was a close friend and mentor of Albion head coach Darren Moore, who has helped organise the memorial match together with the Regis family.

"It's a real honour," said Cyrille's widow Julia. "I think Cyrille would be slightly embarrassed and amused by the attention but that speaks volumes about who he was, understated. In our grief we have taken great comfort by the love everyone has shown and continues to do."

Uni team steps out on football pyramid

THE University of Wolverhampton men's football team has entered a team in the Football League pyramid. The team already plays in the British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) competition but from next season will also enter a team into the Total Motion Midlands Football League.

Known as WLW Football FC the team will be made up of university staff and students, as well as the community, and will play in the league's third division.

The league is the 12th tier of the national football pyramid and is seven tiers away from the National League.

The team is based at the University's Walsall Campus and pre-season training has kicked off this week.

Anyone joining the university in September, or a current student who wants to be involved, should contact Martin Longworth by phone on 07926 647811 or email m.longworth@wlv.ac.uk or James Dale, sports manager, at james.dale@wlv.ac.uk

Sport

SPORTS DESK 01902 319531

Knockout! Champ Joshua is rewriting record books

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Battle of the Baggies II on Khan bill

THE long-awaited Battle of the Baggies II will provide chief support to Amir Khan's return to Birmingham in September.

Jason Welborn and Tommy Langford will head a packed undercard at Arena Birmingham in a British Middleweight title rematch. Welborn won the title from Langford via a split decision in May. Stourbridge's Sam Eggington will feature on the September 8 undercard.

The headline bout is Khan's battle with Samuel Vargas. Also on bill is Ryan Kelly, defending the Midlands Area super welterweight title he won in May via stoppage at Villa Park against unbeaten Dordon man Kelcie Ball, and super bantamweight star Gamal Yafai. But the Welborn-Langford clash is the one that all Midland boxing fans are looking forward to.

"We are delighted to have secured the rematch on such a big show," said Errol Johnson, of Black Country Boxing. "We thank Eddie Hearn and Matchroom Boxing for adding this fight to their bill."

"The first fight was worthy of television, so it's great to know that the wider boxing public will be able to witness the second instalment."

Welborn stunned big favourite Langford at Walsall Town Hall in May to take the British middleweight title – two judges gave the bout to Welborn by 114-113 with the third judge awarding it to Langford at 115-113.

Tickets are £40, £60, £80, £100 and £200 VIP from www.StubHub.co.uk or www.arenabham.co.uk

Robins are moving into a new nest outside borough

DUDLEY Town's club secretary is predicting a bright new era following a summer move to a new home.

The Robins have agreed a deal to play at Oldbury United's former York Road home, ending an 11-year stay at Brierley Hill's Dell Stadium. It is a move outside the Dudley borough for the 130-year-old West Midlands League club, but secretary Dave Ferrier believes it is a step in the right direction after a torrid last 12 months at The Dell.

Long-standing issues with using a complex primarily built for athletics were compounded by rotten weather and badgers digging up the pitch. Ferrier said: "It created havoc, to the point where our league position was in jeopardy and it looked like we would struggle to fulfil our fixture list. We just could not risk having another season like that."

Manager Dean Whitehouse, who won the West Midlands Premier Division title with Tividale in 2012, guided the club to safety and began bringing through some of the club's promising young players.

Town play Halesowen Town in a friendly at the new ground on Saturday.

Charity wins in annual football contest



Mark Evans of Dudley Mind with staff from Higgs & Sons

AN annual football tournament, held in Stourbridge, raised more than £10,000 for charity.

Organised by Higgs & Sons, the annual six-a-side event took place at Stourton Park, the home of Stourbridge RFC with 42 teams competing.

The winners were PKF Cooper Parry, who took the title without conceding a goal, beating PD Financial in the final, a team that featured former Aston Villa player Stiliyan Petrov in its line-up.

All proceeds go to Higgs' charity of the year for 2018, Dudley Mind. Richard Griffiths, a partner

in the Brierley Hill-based firm's corporate team who helps to organise the event, said: "We have been running the tournament since 2006 and it is always rewarding to see so many people come and support us year upon year."

"Businesses and professionals come from across the West Midlands to take part and although there is always a healthy level of competition on the pitch, once the final whistle blows there is a real sense of everyone coming together to support a good cause whilst enjoying a fantastic day out."

CRASH MARS HEATHENS WIN

HEATHENS boss Will Pottinger hailed a 'sensational' display from Drew Kemp as they beat local rivals Birmingham.

The home side romped to a 52-37 win over the Brummies in a clash marred by a horror heat four crash which ruled out Chris Widman and Danyon Hume.

Widman and Hume tangled on the home straight and ploughed through the airforce. Hume aggravated an old arm injury and pulled out of the meeting.

James Shanes and Tom Bacon scored 27 between them for the Brummies, but Kemp reeled off an incredible paid 17 for the Heathens, writes Phil Lanning.

Pottinger said: "Drew was sensational. Obviously we took control after they lost Danyon and we hope both he and Chris are OK. But Drew was out of this world and was the stand-out performance for us.

"All the boys chipped in and we were solid. Losing Chris was tough but with Drew in such great form we coped really well with his absence and it's a good win."

Bacon and Shanes were outstanding for Brummies as they kept the visitors in contention despite losing Hume.

Bacon won heat one in style from Cradley guest Danny Ayres, but the home side took control when 15-year-old Kemp won heat two and, with Widman second, the Heathens were four in front.

The much-awaited war of the wonderkids' never materialised with Shanes roaring clear in heat three and Bickley left at the back behind Flint.

Then came the horror incident in heat four, followed by a repair to the airforce, and from then on it was the Bacon and Shanes show. However, when they weren't in the line-up Brummies were vulnerable and three maximum 5-1s from the rampant Heathens in six races left them reeling.

Test of pupils' sporting skills



Tag rugby at the Black Country School Games Summer Festival

MORE than 1,500 young athletes from schools around the Black Country came together for the seventh staging of The Black Country School Games Summer Festival.

Students from more than 80 schools across Wolverhampton, Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall went head-to-head at The University of Wolverhampton's Walsall campus.

After taking part in sportshall athletics, mul-

ti-skills, rounders, rugby, cricket, dodgeball, tri-golf, multi-skills SEND, football and duathlon, Wolverhampton were crowned champions – taking home the Joel Richards Black Country School Games Festival Cup for the second year in succession. The city's St Andrew's School won the multi-skills and its Girls' High the rounders.

• More pictures next week



Cruel blow as Hales finish 12 runs short

HIMLEY showed a return to form with a winning draw against Halesowen, who responded to a total of 299 for six in 55 overs with 288 for five.

Oliver Westbury compiled 104 from 165 balls for Himley and debutant overseas player Shehan Fernando chipped in with a brisk 87 from 63 balls. For Halesowen, Ed Kilbee scored a round 100 and Hassan Quami hit 65 as he and Kilbee put on 113 for the second wicket. Hales finished 12 runs short of victory after Charlie Hartley clattered 37 not out from 20 balls at the end of the innings.

Halesowen skipper Alexei Kervezev said: "It was a tough afternoon for us. Himley seemed rejuvenated by the arrival of their new overseas player, which we expected, but chasing a total of 300 is always going to be a huge challenge.

"We just needed that extra bit of power in the middle of the innings to take us closer and Charlie nearly provided us with that but it was not to be.

"It seems a cruel game to come within 12 runs of scoring 300 and only get eight points but we remain on a good run and we are tough to beat and at this stage of the season that's good news. However, July is going to be crucial for us and we know it. We have four games where we play two teams rooted at the bottom of the table and two teams that lie above us. We need to be playing our best cricket this month."

Halesowen fall to fifth but are just nine points from third in a topsy turvy season.

Norman out on high in last race for DK

A SHORT trip for the Halesowen 10k fulfilled Dudley Kingswinford Running Club's needs for racing at the weekend.

There were plenty of runners from local clubs, Halesowen AC and Cobra, with the latter's Alex Stephenson the highest placed runner in 12th place.

Dave Norman was first home for the blue hoops in 10th place in 39.46 but this would be his last race for DK.

Gary Davies was 18th in 41.07 to claim the first M50, Kevin Herbert finished in 32nd in 43.43, Graham Wildgoose was 62nd in 47.23, Rory Elrick 82nd in 50.32, John Andrews 117th in 53.53 and Danielle Clements in 219th in 1.02.40.

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